



THE DAY'S BURDEN:
STUDIES, LITERARY AND
POLITICAL.



C

THE
DAY'S BURDEN:
STUDIES, LITERARY
AND POLITICAL.

BY
T. M. KETTLE, M.P.



MAUNSEL AND COMPANY, LTD.
96 MIDDLE ABBEY STREET, DUBLIN

1910

[*All Rights Reserved*]



TO MY WIFE.

*“ Not the sea, only, wrecks the hopes of men,
Look deeper, there is shipwreck everywhere ” :
So mourned the exquisite Roman’s rich despair,
Too high in death for that ignoble pen.
Nero, his wrecker, is amply wrecked since then,
And all that Rome’s a whiff of charnel air ;
But to subdue Petronius’ mal-de-mer
Have we found drugs ? I pray you, What ? and
When ?
Shipwreck, one grieves to say, retains its vogue :
Or let the keel win on in stouter fashion,
And look ! your golden lie of Tir-na-n’Og
Is sunset and waste waters, chill and ashen—
Faith lasts ? Nay, since I knew your yielded
eyes,
I am content with sight . . . of Paradise.*



APOLOGY

THE papers collected here have, for the most part, already appeared in various journals and reviews. I am indebted to the courtesy of the *Morning Leader*, the *New Ireland Review*, the *Fortnightly Review* and Messrs. Maunsel & Co., for leave to re-publish them. In all cases there has been a good deal of revision and re-writing, and an attempt has been made to impress a certain unity on the constituent materials such as may reasonably be looked for in anything that calls itself a book. The study of Otto Effertz appears for the first time, and is, indeed, as far as I know, the only account that has yet been given in English of that bizarre but brilliant pioneer. Topical articles on Egyptian Nationalism and International Socialism have been included because they give a glimpse of movements which, so far as one can judge, are certain to endure, and of leaders whose influence is likely to grow rather than to diminish in the immediate future.

For title I have ventured to use **THE DAY'S BURDEN** because that seems to me to be the most characteristic thing about the day, and

because all these essays are concerned with "problems"—economic, political, and literary. To anyone who, glancing at the foreign names which recur in these pages, asks with a sniff of contempt, "What has all this got to do with Ireland?" I do not know what reply to make. Something like this, perhaps: Ireland, a small nation is, none the less, large enough to contain all the complexities of the twentieth century. There is no ecstasy and no agony of the modern soul remote from her experience; there is none of all the difficulties which beset men, eager to build at last a wise and stable society, that she has not encountered. In some of them she has even been the forerunner of the world. If this generation has, for its first task, the recovery of the old Ireland, it has, for its second, the discovery of the new Europe. Ireland awaits her Goethe—but in Ireland he must not be a Pagan—who will one day arise to teach her that while a strong people has its own self for centre, it has the universe for circumference. All cultures belong to a nation that has once taken sure hold of its own culture. A national literature that seeks to found itself in isolation from the general life of humanity can only produce the pale and waxen growths of a plant isolated from the sunlight. In gaining her own soul Ireland will gain the whole world. Till that Goethe is born, and the new fabric begins to rise under his inspiration, we must go on shovelling together our trivial heaps of sand and rubble.

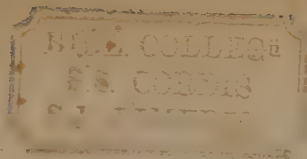
That is all I would dare to say in placation of the contemptuous sniff. Originality is a toy that no goddess left in my cradle. My only programme for Ireland consists, in equal parts, of Home Rule and the Ten Commandments. My only counsel to Ireland is, that in order to become deeply Irish, she must become European.

October, 1910.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
APOLOGY	vii
THE PHILOSOPHY OF POLITICS	3
ON CROSSING THE IRISH SEA	25
OTTO EFFERTZ : GENTLEMAN SOCIALIST .	33
ON WRITTEN CONSTITUTIONS	61
BODY <i>v.</i> SOUL : FOR THE PLAINTIFF, FRANCIS THOMPSON.....	69
REVERIES OF ASSIZE	85
A NEW WAY OF MISUNDERSTANDING <i>Hamlet</i>	93
YOUNG EGYPT	111
THE FATIGUE OF ANATOLE FRANCE.....	119
INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS	135
A FRENCHMAN'S IRELAND	143
REASON IN RHYME	155
ON SAYING GOOD-BYE ..?	161





THE PHILOSOPHY OF POLITICS*

THE subject I have chosen for my paper is almost an insult to your intelligence. I could occupy the whole time at my disposal by merely reading you a list of writers who have devoted themselves to the establishment of a science of politics, and among them you would find, from Aristotle downwards, the masters and shapers of human thought. What then must you think of the audacity of an attempt, with the inadequate time and the infinitely inadequate resources at my command, to give some account not merely of political science but of the philosophical ideas on which it rests? I know, however, that I can count on your indulgence. And I would ask you to accept the title of this paper in a large and charitable way, and to forgive its pretentiousness.

It does seem to me that a political society like this is under the obligation of taking an

* Presidential Address before the Young Ireland Branch of the United Irish League, December, 1905.

occasional bath in the sea of fundamental ideas. Practical people regard such a proceeding, it must be admitted, with extreme distrust. If one desires an early and extensive unpopularity there is no surer way to it than to insist on analysing received principles. Our mothers, you will remember, used to have the strangest objection to our taking their watches to pieces. They rather doubted our competence to put the springs and wheels together again. Society experiences much the same state of mind with regard to the attempt to reduce it to terms of mere reason. Society is right, but it is only the nineteenth century that has made its attitude possible. It needed a long development of psychological and historical study to make us understand that reason is but one faculty of a many-facultied being ; that the forces which used to be brusquely dismissed as mere sentiment, mere instinct, mere enthusiasm, are inseparable elements of human nature. We have come to realise, in a word, that life is in comparably vaster, more various, and more complex than any theory of it. I dwell on this because it has a special bearing on our subject. In approaching political science we must remember that it does not profess to reproduce the rich detail of life in society, but stands to it rather as a chart to an ocean or a mathematical formula to the path of a planet. Still, if reason has abandoned the tyranny which it once aimed at, its call can none the less be denied. We must render ourselves

some rational account of the forces by which and among which we live. Among the greatest of these is the society, the political framework, in which we are born and in which our lives are cast. Call yourself a non-politician as loudly as you choose, you will never succeed in ignoring politics ; therefore of necessity an attempt must be made to understand them. What is the object of politics, what we are justified in expecting it to do and what it cannot do, what part it should play in the life of the individual modern man, and what is the temper in which a wise man will approach it—these are questions neither remote nor abstract, but questions that come knocking at your door and mine, and that have to be answered. All I can hope to do to-night is to suggest, in a random and completely undogmatic fashion, points of view from which politics may be regarded, and principles by which the efficiency of institutions may be tested.

When we speak of politics as a science we must remember that the word is used with a difference. The characteristic note of a natural science is its ability to predict with mathematical accuracy. Such prophetic power cannot be attributed to politics. The stupendous complexity of the subject-matter, the endless chain of action and interaction make it impossible to gather all the data necessary for certainty. And then that unpredictable element called free-will is constantly interloping to upset the logic of your

determinist drama. Still there are large principles which seem to approach the certainty of physical laws. One can find a ready illustration in what we very properly heard a great deal about at the Convention the other day, the need for unity. That without unity—of action, of course, for absolute unity of thought and feeling we neither can have, nor should demand—a political party must be ineffective is surely just as certain as any law of chemistry or physics? The principle it embodies is one implicit in the constitution of every state, namely, that the will of the majority of duly chosen representatives must, as regards action, prevail over the will of the minority. Deny that principle and you cannot pass a single legislative Act; you cannot levy a single tax. In the long history of English insolence there is hardly anything else so insolent as Mr. Balfour's demand with regard to our University Question. He said, you will remember, that no Bill could be introduced to realise this reform unless there was absolute unanimity among all interested parties in Ireland. Had he applied that maxim consistently to English political life, to political life anywhere, the result would be that no government could continue for twelve hours. In proclaiming it Mr. Balfour was proclaiming himself an Anarchist. This principle, then, that the will of the majority, registered in the due forms and under the due safeguards of individual freedom, must prevail over the will of the minority affords

a good example of the sort of established law we can hope for in political science.

I pass on to the fundamental question : What is the object of politics ? Politics in its largest sense includes the whole control and management of public affairs by the government in power, together with the whole process of agitation by which the masses of people not in power seek to influence and alter the conduct of things. Now, if you look in the text-books you will find that the object of government is order. But what is the object of order ? That is a point which ought to be considered by the inflamed gentlemen from the West of Ireland who write letters signed " A Disgusted Loyalist " to the *Irish Times* demanding the vindication of what they call " law and order." Law and order are not absolutes, but merely means to an end. To mistake them for ends in themselves is to regard the shell as the important element in the egg, the fence as the important element in the field. The cry of " Order for Order's sake " is as ruinously foolish as that of art for art's sake, or money for money's sake. It is for the sake of humanity that all these must exist. Behind order there is life, and it is only in so far as it tends to increase the sum and improve the quality of life that any system of government or scheme of positive law is ethically justifiable. If you analyse the rights commonly regarded as essential and inalienable—the right to property, to personal safety, to marriage—you will find as the

common source of them all this right to life. And by life I mean not merely physical existence, but that rich human existence which can be had only in community, that sort of life which Edmund Burke had in mind when he described the State as "a partnership in all science, a partnership in all art, a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection."

You will say, perhaps, that this test of government—*Does it forward life?*—is vague. Life, even in the biological sense, has not been defined. That is perfectly true. But we do not demand, as I have said, in politics the mapped-out mathematical certainty of natural science. The average man possesses a sufficiently clear notion for practical purposes of the conditions that make life desirable, beautiful, and worthy to be lived. A government is good or bad, the order it maintains is the discipline of liberty or that of oppression, in so far as it promotes or hinders the wide diffusion of these conditions. I think you will find this test of *life* a helpful one in your attempt to gather together in some binding idea the currents of effort that make up contemporary Ireland. Somebody has compared the *rôle* of a general idea to that of a magnet. If you bring a magnet into contact with a glass plate on which there is a confused mass of iron filings it immediately strains and sets them into regular and beautiful patterns. The filings represent the chaos of concrete facts that experience brings thronging in on us, and the magnetic idea that

makes them intelligible, as it has created them, is that of life. It is the one justificatory word on the tongues of the emigrants as they stream down to the ships. They "want to see life." By no mere accident is it that the Gaelic League which started with language has gathered round it games, singing, dancing, and all the arts of friendly intercourse. These all stand for life, joyously realising itself under benign conditions. It has been said that all government exists to hang a fowl before the Sunday fire of every peasant. Dancing is less necessary than eating, and more beautiful. It represents the free energy of a life that has not merely withstood but has conquered the hostility of external circumstances, and you will understand the sense in which I say that all contemporary Irish movements exist in order to set a boy and a girl dancing at a Sunday *ceilidh*.

Analyse the agitation to break up the grass-ranches and to give the land to the people and to the plough and you will find that it rests on two assumptions—not very daring assumptions! The first is that the life of a human being is more precious and worthier to be forwarded by the State than that of a bullock. The second is that if an individual persists in so using the property which society allows him to control, as to base his personal comfort and prosperity on the misery and degradation of others, while a cleaner way of living is open to him, then society has both the right and the duty to break

his selfish monopoly.* For he has declared war on society, and has violated the obligations of the social bond.

This test of *life* changes our attitude towards positive law in general. Take the common description of life that it is a "continuous adjustment of internal to external relations" and apply it to human society, and, in its light, law loses its old iron absoluteness. It shows itself not as something fixed and immutable, but as an imperfect transcript of the moral conditions necessary to safeguard life, changing continually with these conditions. Ethical principles are,

* Cf. Naudet, *Premiers Principes de Sociologie Catholique*. Bloud et Cie, Paris, 1904. P. 31. "The Canon Law, as the great historian Janssen tells us, regarded property as a fief granted by God. This doctrine, founded on Scripture, involves the evident consequence that the owner of property is responsible before God for the use to which he puts his property. He must not use it after his mere caprice; and the Popes as guardians of the law of justice have more than once asserted this principle against owners who had disregarded it. Thus we find Clement IV., in the thirteenth century, giving permission to any stranger to break up the third part of an estate which the owner persistently refused to till. Sixtus IV., in the fifteenth century, decrees that 'power is given in future and always to all and each to till and sow in the territory of Rome and the patrimony of St. Peter, in Tuscany as well as on the littoral of Campania, at the usual and proper times, one third of the uncultivated lands, to be chosen at will, whoever the landlord should be' It was held sufficient to have asked the landlord for leave to enter on the lands, even though this leave had been refused." Naudet cites Clement VII., Pius VI. and Pius VII. as having confirmed and renewed this insistence on the social duties of property.

of course, invariable ; but the formal enactments in which they are imperfectly embodied form a system, developing, as we hope, towards a fuller realisation. It is the thought-climate, called in a large way evolution, and so characteristic of the nineteenth century, that has given us this new point of view. We have applied it to some pretensions of the law courts and seen them wither up ; we might also extend it to some of the commonplaces of popular thought. There is not, I suppose, a more insistent and widespread demand with regard to Irish questions than that they should be “ finally ” settled. But once grasp the idea of a state as a living, developing organism, and this expectation of finality is seen to be a pure illusion. Popular thought is never altogether wrong, and of course there is an obvious sense in which, for example, a comprehensive measure of Home Rule might be regarded as a “ final ” settlement of our political status. Still, even in this case, the notion is illusory and misleading. Life is growth ; growth is change ; and the one thing of which we are certain is that society must keep moving on. Freedom is a battle and a march. It has many bivouacs, but no barracks. You remember the counsel given by the serving-man in the heroic tale to Diarmuid and Grainne. “ In the place where you catch your food you must not cook it, and in the place where you cook it you must not eat it, and in the place where you eat it you must not sleep : ” On society an anal-

ogous doom—if you call it a doom—has been pronounced.

I have dwelt on this illusion of finality because one sees it everywhere producing a dogmatic conservatism, a feeling of things done and done with, than which there is no greater obstacle to progress. You go to a statesman and say—"This problem of the Congested Districts is terribly pressing. You must bring in legislation to deal with it." Then he looks up his statute-book and says—"Congested Districts! Oh, that question is settled; we passed an Act in 1891." It is much the same as if you were to say to a starving man—"Dinner! Oh, you had a dinner two months ago."

The object of politics then is order, and the object of order is to increase the sum and improve the quality of human life. What, we may next ask, is the drift of current opinion as to the means that should be used and the psychological forces that must be put in harness in order to this end? In other words, what political ideas has the experience of the wonderful nineteenth century left most clearly defined? There can be but little dispute as to the answer. The two supreme facts, the two shaping forces of the nineteenth century were Nationality and Democracy—the latter come in direct lineage from the French Revolution, the former brought first to full self-consciousness by the reaction against the abstract cosmopolitanism of '89. Look to Irish history and you will see at once

that these have been the shaping forces of the last century of her life. But look elsewhere and you will see the same; you will see that in this as in so many other things Ireland has been in the main stream of European history. The opinion of an Irish Nationalist may be suspect. I appeal therefore to the authority of Professor Bury, formerly of Trinity College, now Regius Professor of History at Cambridge. He is speaking of the impulse given to historical studies by the upsurging of national feeling, for, of course, a nation is before all things a spiritual principle whose source and charter is to be found in history.

“The saying,” he writes, “that the name of hope is remembrance was vividly illustrated, on a vast scale, by the spirit of resurgent nationality which you know has governed, as one of the most puissant forces, the political course of the last century and is still unexhausted. When the peoples, inspired by the national idea, were stirred to mould their destinies anew, and looking back with longing to the more distant past based on it their claims for independence or for unity, history was one of the most effective weapons in their armouries; and consequently a powerful motive was supplied to historical investigation.” *

* Bury. *An Inaugural Lecture*, 1903. P. 13. That great master of common sense and uncommon sanctity, St. Thomas Aquinas, has his lesson for modern Imperialism—“It belongs to the study of politics to know

In Belgium, in Italy, in Hungary, in Germany, in Norway, in Poland, in Ireland, nationality has been the great formative and disruptive impulse of the nineteenth century. Whatever gloomy mood we may fall into in the struggle for autonomy we have certainly no justification for feeling lonely! There was a school of political philosophy—it still lifts here and there an antique voice—which, when it had called nationality a mere sentiment, thought that it had dismissed it from the arena of practical affairs. That habit of mind may have been excusable in the eighteenth century, but we understand things better now. We realise life in its concrete richness and man as a complex of remembrances, instincts, intuitions, and emotional needs. The historical studies of the last century, the Romantic Movement, and the vast development of psychology, both in formal studies and in art of every kind, especially the novel, have rehabilitated that vast area of consciousness which used to be dismissed

how great should be the magnitude of a state and whether it should embrace men of one or many races; for the greatness of a state should be such that the fertility of its land is sufficient to its needs, and that it should be able to repel violent enemies. For it ought rather to be founded of one race; some oneness of nationality, involving the same manners and customs, is that which brings about friendship among citizens because of their likeness: whence states that were made up of divers nations, by reason of the dissensions that they had because of the diversity of their customs, were destroyed, since one party joined with the enemy for hatred of the other party."—Cf. H. C. O'Neill, *New Things and Old in St. Thomas Aquinas*.

as "sentiment." There was a time when man was conceived as an avaricious machine. If you found anything in your mind other than calculating selfishness you were outside the pale of humanity. But now nobody need be ashamed to admit that he detects himself in an occasional generous impulse. Louis Kossuth was saying the other day that "it is in active national sentiment not in political forms that we are to look for the secret of government." And there is not a Foreign Office in Europe but recognises that where there is an historic nationality, unexpressed so far in the form of a visible state, there is a contradiction of human nature which cannot last. You will not ask me to analyse the idea of Nationality. It has been discussed in this country for the last nine or ten years with an earnestness amounting often to fury, and nearly everything has been said. "The nation," says Anstole France, in a fine phrase, "is a communion of memories and of hopes." You may well find its source in that need for self-realisation which is also, in one view, the source of all individual morality. But that is a notion drawn from German metaphysics, and metaphysics, if we are to believe all we read in our weekly papers, is the unforgivable sin. But this I will say, that if you read any one of the treatises on politics, read at Oxford and Cambridge by the young gentlemen who afterwards come over to dragoon us, you will find that there is not in the most exacting of them a single test of nationality

which Ireland does not satisfy. A distinctive language, a characteristic national temperament and outlook on life, a history, a sentiment of unity in the present, common memories, common interests, a geographical area large enough to constitute an independent state—is there a single one of these elements that we do not possess? If you go even further and examine the conditions demanded by these English writers to justify rebellion or disruption, adding to what has been said as to the satisfaction of national sentiment, this—I quote from Sidgwick—“Some serious oppression or misgovernment, some unjust sacrifice or grossly incompetent management of their interests, or some persistent and harsh opposition to their legitimate desires,” you will find on the principles of these English writers themselves that an Irish War of Independence would be to-day justifiable if it were possible.

Side by side with nationality stands democracy. It is impossible to define democracy; it is a principle still unrealised, an unfinished process. It has been described as “that form of social organisation which tends to develop to the maximum the conscience and the responsibility of the individual citizen.” This description lays stress on the central characteristic of democracy, the belief in individuality and the endeavour to foster it. To the feudalistic governing mind the citizen, or rather I should say the “subject,” was an item, a something

little better than a chattel, committed to the care of those whom, as the old jurists said, Providence had placed over him. The placing had, as a matter of fact, been done by the luck of circumstances. If a man had the wisdom to be born well, he sat on the necks of the masses ; if he were born badly, his own neck suffered for it. Such a tyranny as this, even if it were beneficent, could not live in the atmosphere of the modern world. We have discovered that nobody is wise enough or pure enough to bear the temptation of uncontrolled power, and we are endeavouring as far as possible to remove such occasions of sin. The democratic spirit may be said to be more or less expressible in two propositions. The first is that government should rest on the active consent of the governed. It is this right and necessity of human nature that has been behind the demand for representative institutions from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the end, from the Paris barricades of 1830 and the English Reform Bill of 1832 to the Russian Revolution and the Women Suffrage movement. The second thesis of democracy is, roughly, that any one self-supporting and law-abiding citizen is, on the average, as well qualified as another for the work of government. I should prefer to put it that no citizen, or section of citizens, is as likely to conduct the government for the general benefit as the whole body of citizens acting in concert. Wherever there is a privileged class there is corruption, and a cult of sectional to the disregard of wider interests.

Democracy will, of course, have its governing classes, but they will not be fortified about with unbreachable privileges. If we now turn to Irish history it is easy to see that it is a passage from feudalism to democracy. Thus, when Mr. Michael Davitt came to write the story of the Land War, he inevitably called it *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*. Under the same title you might gather every stream of agitation, every Act that could be in any sense called beneficial, from the Abolition of Tithes and Catholic Emancipation to the Local Government Act. They are all parts of a process which is shifting the centre of power from privileged, arbitrary classes to responsible, representative classes. It is significant also that in that question most remote from current politics, higher education, Democracy has been taken for the pillar of light. Everywhere the demand is for a democratic University ; and we mean by that not only that the fees must be low but that the civic fervour of the institution must be high, and that it must be a centre of creative democratic thought.

To speak of politics is necessarily to speak of education, at least of education in citizenship. A few words must suffice. Public opinion in this country has made up its mind that its schools shall be places in which love and reverence for the motherland shall be fostered. Democracy will teach in its schools, as well, love and reverence for the State. It is the fashion to disbelieve in the practical value of ideas and enthusiasms, but

a democratised Ireland will understand human nature better. The chief channel of instruction will naturally be history, modern history. The complete neglect of this is the scandal of English education. History is not only the true scientific method of approach to social problems, it is the very substance of citizenship.

"It is of vital importance," writes Professor Bury, "for citizens to have a true knowledge of the past and to see it in a dry light in order that their influence on the present and future may be exerted in right directions. . . ."

And he adds—

"It seems inevitable that, as this truth is more fully and widely though slowly realised, the place which history occupies in national education will grow larger and larger."

"In France, in Germany, in America," writes the Regius Professor of History at Oxford, Mr. Firth, "nineteenth century history, national and European, has a permanent place in historical studies. It is not considered unfit for teaching or unworthy of study; nor is it held that historical teachers or students are incapable of studying it without displays of party feeling." *

So much for what I believe to be the two main ideas explanatory of contemporary Ireland as of Europe in general. One word seems to be necessary as to the limitations of politics. Politics is the science of order: it cannot take the place of

* C. H. Firth. *A Plea for the Historical Teaching of History*. P. 17.

the other human activities, but can only keep them in their places. Extravagant demands are sometimes made on politicians, especially in Ireland. Because they are described as "representative," people expect to find incarnate in them the whole national life from the making of shirts to the making of poetry. But politics, as such, is just as much a specialised activity as brick-laying. It is not co-extensive with life; there are vast areas of private life into which it would be tyranny for it to intrude. It does not claim, and you cannot ask it to make shirts or poetry. Its duty is to provide the conditions in which the greatest number of citizens can live happily, whether by making shirts or by making sonnets.

In what spirit should one approach the actual work of politics? I speak only for myself, but I think that one should take enthusiasm for the driving force and irony as a refuge against the inevitable disappointments. "What I need to realise," says Spencer, "is how infinitesimal is the importance of anything I can do, and how infinitely important it is that I should do it." Might not a politician choose a worse motto than that? Disillusionment is so commonly the fifth act of political agitation, mainly because of the illusive finality upon which I have touched. But a wise man soon grows disillusioned of disillusionment. The first lilac freshness of life will, indeed, never return. The graves are sealed, and no hand will open them to give us back dead comrades or dead dreams. As we

look out on the burdened march of humanity, as we look in on the leashed but straining passions of our unpurified hearts, we can but bow our heads and accept the discipline of pessimism. Bricriu must have his hour as well as Cuchullin. But the cynical mood is one that can be resisted. Cynicism, however excusable in literature, is in life the last treachery, the irredeemable defeat. Politics, let us remember, is the province not of the second-best, as has been said, but of the second worst. We must be content, or try to be content, with little. But we must continue loyal to the instinct that makes us hope much ; we must believe in all the Utopias.

If you engage in politics in Ireland, and if conditions remain as they are, certain other points must be remembered. You would do well to study the novitiate through which an idea passes before it becomes a law. It arises out of the misery, and contains in it the salvation of a countryside ; the State welcomes it with a policeman's baton. It recovers ; the State puts it in jail, on a plank bed, and feeds it on skilly. It becomes articulate in Parliament ; a statesman from the moral altitude of £5,000 a year denounces it as the devilish device of a hired demagogue. It grows old, almost obsolete, no longer adequate ; the statesman steals it, embodies it in an Act, and goes down to British history as a daring reformer. From your own side also there will be something to be borne. If you cannot agree with a colleague as to tactics, even

though they be but minor tactics, he may found a paper, or write a letter, or a lyric, denouncing you to posterity as a traitor, red-handed with your country's blood. I see no help for it except to take these things as mere bye-play, decorative flourishes on the text of politics. After all there is the two-edged sword that will never fail you, with enthusiasm for one of its edges and irony for the other. However mired and weedy be the current of life there will be always joy and loyalty enough left to keep you unwavering in the faith that politics is not as it seems in clouded moments, a mere gabble and squabble of selfish interests, but that it is the State in action. And the State is the name by which we call the great human conspiracy against hunger and cold, against loneliness and ignorance ; the State is the foster-mother and warden of the arts, of love, of comradeship, of all that redeems from despair that strange adventure which we call human life.

ON CROSSING THE
IRISH SEA

ON CROSSING THE IRISH SEA

GEOGRAPHY is a prudent science: but one day she will take risks, even the risk of being interesting. She will hang about the naked games and gaunt outline of places their due garment of romance. When that time comes it is not a scientist but a poet that will be chosen to evoke the spirits of hatred and tragedy, of malice and despair, of irony and disillusion which move, with unpausing haste but with no rest, over the waters of the Irish Sea.

Yet there is no outer thing that should awaken such a mood. It is a bright, even a radiant day as we clear the harbour, which in English is the King's Town, but in Irish the Port of Laoire. The sunlight as it falls is shattered into a manifold glitter of diamonds. The soft purples and cloudy greys of the Wicklow hills shepherd you into the fold of dreams. "A pleasant land of drowsihead," as the first James Thomson would have called it, with the formal romanticism of his formal century. A vision before which the soul might well forget its anguish, and remember only its

aspirations. But over it there is a shadow not of the sun's casting, the shadow of history.

A chapter of the New Geography may very well open somewhat after this fashion : Ireland is a small but insuppressible island half an hour nearer the sunset than Great Britain. From Great Britain it is separated by the Irish Sea, the Act of Union, and the perorations of the Tory party. The political philosophy of the last of these is even shallower than the physical basin of the first. Ireland is discovered from time to time by valiant journalists, mostly of a sensitive temperament. Their accounts vary. Ireland is, however, admitted by all to be unprogressive : as witness, when it is half-past twelve in London it is only five minutes past twelve in Dublin.

The people of Ireland are universally described as absolutely incapable of united action. At the same time the political machine is so monstrously efficient as to suppress all individual freedom. Observers are agreed that the Irish exhibit no tenacity of purpose or stability of character. Indeed, Froude explained the failure of Celtic Ireland to develop a native drama by this circumstance. No Irishman—he argued—has sufficient consistency of character to carry him through five acts : and you cannot put a man into a play if he insists on becoming somebody else at the end of every Act. Infirm of purpose and frail of ethical fibre as she is—and all her impartial enemies concur as to the fact—Ireland has for seven centuries withstood the

impact of the strongest nation in Western Europe.

Ireland has been finally conquered at least three times ; she has died in the last ditch repeatedly ; she has been a convict in the dock, a corpse on the dissecting-table, a street-dog yapping at the heels of Empire, a geographical expression, a misty memory. And with an obtuseness to the logic of facts which one can only call mulish, she still answers "Adsum." Her interdicted flag still floats at the mast-head, and, brooding over the symbol, she still keeps building an impossible future on an imaginary past. English parties in turn wipe her for ever off the slate of practical politics. She remains wiped off for a year or two ; but as the sands slip by, the sand-built policies crumble and collapse. New battalions loom up to the right wing or the left ; and the Tory Press remembers the phrase of the Confederate General who saw victory suddenly snatched out of his hands by Meagher's Brigade : "There comes that damned green flag again !"

All this might seem a matter of racial pride, and a sign of racial strength. But any Unionist can see with half an eye—and people are Unionists precisely because they have only half an eye to see with—that it is mere obstinacy. It is motivated by the same folly which leads a man to waste his substance in litigation in order that he may live for all time as a leading case. Ireland clamours incessantly for Home Rule ; she wants to sit in her own armchair by her own

fireside and mind her own business. But the very iteration of this demand is, to any well-conditioned mind, conclusive proof that it is not sincere.

The unbroken triumph of the same program at election after election shows it to be the watchword of a purely artificial agitation. To give Ireland what she asks for would clearly be to promote discontent and disloyalty. In view of the peril of foreign assault and invasion it is an indispensable part of military tactics that Great Britain and Ireland should be enemies, not friends. Unless Irish members of Parliament were compelled to settle the question of English education, and English members of Parliament compelled to settle the question of Irish land tenure, the whole fabric of civilisation would be compromised.

It may very well be that Ireland, as a result, is the spectre at the banquet of Empire. But was a banquet ever dramatically complete without a spectre? Lord Castlereagh's Act of Union must be upheld, so much wiser is it to tie the parts of an Empire together with a thread of formal law rather than to let them grow together in the organic unity which joins the main branch of a tree to the trunk. To be sure, Home Rule does not involve the repeal even of Lord Castlereagh's Act of Union, but it is the duty of every loyal citizen to pretend that it means complete separation. To tell the truth would shame the devil, and where would Imperialism be without

the devil? As between England and Ireland, therefore,

Let wisdom, friendship, peace, and commerce die,
But leave us still the politician's lie.

These are, perhaps, unpardonable thoughts. It would be better to go and sit in the smoking-room, or move about amid the lively bustle of lawyers, legislators, cattle-dealers, golfers, journalists, bat-eyed tourists, and hawk-eyed commercial travellers who are doing their valiant best to annex the Irish Sea in the interest of that most greedy of all the Imperialisms, the Commonplace.

They are doing their best, but they are not succeeding. It was Uhland, I think, who paid the Rhine boatman a double fare because he had carried, unknowingly, the ghost of a dead comrade. The Company would be rich, indeed, if all the ghosts that hurry restlessly back and forward across the Irish Sea were amenable to the ticket-office! Strongbow, the first filibuster, with MacMurrough, the first traitor; Kildare, the masterful earl; Shane O'Neill going in saffron pride to greet Elizabeth as a king greets a queen; Sarsfield passing to exile and death in France; the highwaymen-bishops of the eighteenth century; Castlereagh, O'Connell, Balfour, Parnell . . . the very names are an epic and a litany of desolation.

But the deck is beginning to experiment in positions other than the horizontal. The grey,

cold, sliding treachery of the sea comes out through the surface brightness. One wonders if the sea that gives empires may not take them suddenly back. At all events, I am going to be sea-sick. It will be another argument for Home Rule. "The Channel," said Grattan, using the English name for the Irish Sea, "forbids union, as the ocean forbids separation." One should be glad to be sea-sick in assertion of so slashing an epigram. To-night there will be the million globes of London to look at, gleaming through the fog like monstrous and sinister oranges in some garden of life and death. To-morrow afternoon we shall be in the House of Commons supping full of old calumnies and hatreds. But when is Ireland going to have her chance? When will voyagers, leaning on the deck-rail, catch the first purple glimpse of Wicklow with eyes innocent of political passion?

1909.

OTTO EFFERTZ :
GENTLEMAN SOCIALIST

OTTO EFFERTZ : GENTLEMAN SOCIALIST*

BOOKS have their fates ; and it can only be an unhappy fate that has prevented Otto Effertz' *Les Antagonismes Economiques* from achieving a brilliant position in the literature of Socialism. It is by no means his first appearance, and he is very far from being a raw revolutionary. As long ago as 1888 he made public his novel and characteristic thought in *Arbeit Und Boden*. The book was tendered as a thesis, Effertz tells us, to every University in Germany, and was rejected not *sans phrase*, but on the contrary with many phrases of violent and even scurrilous contempt by them all. The Social Democrats were no better pleased with a writer who claimed to have shattered Marxism with a single tap of his new hammer, and none of their journals so much as reviewed *Arbeit Und Boden*. But, on the other hand, Adere writing in Conrad's great *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, hailed Effertz as one of the

* *Les Antagonismes Economiques*. Otto Effertz. Paris, Giard et Brière.

few theorists of Socialism of whom the Economics of the future must take account. M. Charles Andler, who contributes a preface to *Les Antagonismes*, lectured on him in Paris. M. Adolphe Landry, whose text-book is as widely used by students in France and Switzerland as that of Gide, ranks him consistently as the peer of Marshall, Schmoller and Philipovich. Nevertheless, he hastens to add, this original German is practically unknown, and his work has been treated with contemptuous silence. Effertz himself seems to ascribe some of his ill-fortune to the fact that his first book was written in German, which is a local dialect. French is the international language of science; he will, therefore, with the aid of M. Landry, publish himself in French, and appeal to an international jury. The new departure does not seem to have succeeded. Effertz has been neither condemned nor commended by that part of the jury which sits in these countries. His book, although issued so long ago as 1906, seems hardly to have reached us. Reach us some day it must, and to bridge over the interval that separates us from a more competent performance of the task I venture to give an outline of the ideas of this strong, subtle and adventurous thinker.

Effertz is a Socialist, but he wears his red tie with a difference. He is a Socialist because Socialism is the only form of economic organisation that will allow him to be a gentleman. His theory holds out to humanity the promise not

of a more abundant table, but of more delicate table-manners. Remembering a fact which we are seldom suffered to forget—the existence, namely, of Mr. Bernard Shaw—one does not go so far as to signalise the haughtiness and daintiness of Effertz as representing a new mood in the mind of Socialism. But there is a wide gulf between the two. What to Mr. Shaw is but an elfish epigram, flung with wicked exuberance at Suburbia, is to Effertz a basal belief, an ultimate dogma, a burning passion. Under the stress of its attack many familiar lines of interpretation and of defence must be abandoned. Socialism, many of us had found comfort in saying, is a mirage of hunger. It is the economic science, or rather the economic poetry of the poor. It is the visioned, Fortunate Islands of the disinherited. It is the Sociology of anæmia and defeat. If the material life of humanity is, in Kropotkin's phrase, the conquest of bread, then popular Socialism is the wail of those who have been shouldered out of the market-place with their baskets unfilled. In the philosophy of certain of our unstrung capitalists it is something even worse. It is the Satanic demand that stones should be changed into bread, in order to sustain a population swarming beyond all bounds of prudence and self-control. "You are pauperised by the capitalistic regime," cried out Marx in effect to the proletariat. "In the name of the bread of which you are defrauded, Workers of all countries, Unite!" To Effertz this hunger-

Socialism, as one may call it, is at once unworthy and unscientific. Not by bread alone do men live, but by culture and freedom—freedom, above all, to speak the truth. He stands for a social ideal of four dimensions; for to *Liberté*, *Egalité*, *Fraternité* he has added another watchword, more strident and exacting than any of these, *Dignité*. His case against individualism is not that it breaks the bodies of the poor with famine, but that it defiles the souls of all men, the rich as well as the poor. Like the aged lion in the fable he suffers not so much from the pain as from the indignity of the donkey's kick. Moreover, he insists, with a touch of passion, popular Socialism is dishonest in the prospect which it holds out of illimitable harvests drawn from an earth so limited both in area and in fertility. His system of Pono-Physiocratic Socialism assuredly does not mean food for all under any circumstances of increase. It offers no unbroken round of banquets, fit for Sybaris. Humanity, however wisely and scientifically organised, will find itself caught perpetually between the Scylla of restrained reproduction and the Charybdis of starvation. But if Socialism does not promise a junketting Utopia, what, then, does it promise? It promises, in the horoscope of Effertz, a world in which men, while declining to be angels, will be able to be gentlemen. Liberty—that is to say, mere personal liberty—already approximates to its maximum in modern countries; under this rubric communised States will have no new

revelation to expound. Equality cannot but widen and greaten with the growing abundance of "goods of culture" the *biens de culture* which he sets in such antithetical contrast to the *biens d'alimentation*. The general "aristocratisation" of the forms of social life will bring new kingdoms under the sway of Fraternity. When we are all aristocrats it will be easy for us all to be brothers. "But the great glory of Pono-Physiocratic Socialism will centre in the complete abolition of all the indignities of the present system. A man will no longer be compelled to accept the servilities, the brutalities, the lies, the frauds, the treacheries, the whole mass of defilements and degradations which swarm in the heart of our capitalistic society, and which are forced on every member of it under the penalty of starvation for himself and his family." The rich will be redeemed from that sense of insecurity which, more even, and far more, than the appetite for actual enjoyment, is the impulse behind their unquiet lives. The worker, with trained hands eager to produce wealth for the commodity of his fellows, will no longer stand at the factory-gate begging work as an alms. The employer will be free, as now he is not free, not to exploit his employes. The shopkeeper will be free, as now he is not free, not to lie and cheat. We shall be able at last to cancel that dictum of Cicero's which is now the universal charter of the business community! *Nihil enim proficiunt*

institores ipsi nisi admodum mentiantur. "It is commonly said," writes Effertz in the last of his six hundred vibrating pages, "that the social question is a belly-question, or, in more æsthetic language, a knife-and-fork question. When people preach Socialism they make their appeal to the famishing and the tatterdemalions. The world is agreed that a rich man can be a Socialist only out of condescension, or political ambition, or ethical aspiration, or simply, as a joke, but never on grounds of personal interest. To accept this view is to understand very poorly the essence of Socialism. Bread and the promise of bread, there you have the weakest point of Socialism! Socialism is before all else a question of culture and dignity. When we preach Socialism it is to the dignity of mankind that we must primarily appeal. *Gentlemen of all countries, Unite!*"

Such is the ethos and inspiration of this strange book. If Effertz brings a new temper to Socialism, he also brings a new theory. He himself is indeed urgent to disclaim all originality; his only gift is that of fertilising the neglected commonplaces of Economics. The professors of that science have not understood the value of their analyses; like Balaam's ass they speak great words without understanding what they speak. They have a Cyclopean power to quarry huge blocks of stone, but the lyre of Apollo does not sound among them to uprear the walls of Troy. The fundamental truths of economic science are as old as Petty and Bernouilli: they are ex-

pounded in every rudimentary manual of the subject. But there is a curious flaw in such expositions. The basal laws and problems are formulated indeed, but not "sacramentally," not *in sede materiae*. This flaw Effertz will correct, and therein lies his sole originality. His only other novelty is a novelty of arrangement. He introduces into Sociology the dramatic principle. The fact of antagonism of interest between individual and individual, between the individual and society, between the present and the future, being ultimate, we shall do well to cast our treatment of it into the literary form most appropriate to such an order of reality. This is obviously the drama, for the essential note of drama is the conflict of wills. The first section of such a Sociology will correspond to the Intrigue, the delineation of interests. The second will exhibit as Catastrophe the clash in actual life of one economic interest with another. In the third section, analogous to the Intermediate Chorus, the writer will proceed to an ethical criticism of a conflict, the economic mechanism of which has thus been exhibited. This merges into the Denouement, a discussion of the legal and political arrangements by which the lesion of higher interests may as far as possible be avoided; and our drama of humanity culminates in the Final Chorus, with a summary of those antagonisms which enquiry shows to be irreconcilable, and lamentations over the incurable evils of life. The five divisions may

be rendered into more usual nomenclature as the sciences of Pure Economics and Applied Economics, the arts of agitation and of statesmanship, with a finale of philosophy. The adequate handling of this five-fold analysis gives ample play to the rich and subtle mind of Effertz. Mathematician, psychologist, pioneer, dandy, and admirable classicist, he has a sense of style and a feeling for literature unequalled by any German thinker since Schopenhauer. Differential equations rub shoulders with dashing epigrams. We plod with difficult steps through pages of curves and graphs, and then suddenly the wilderness of x and y blossoms like the rose. Effertz is, as I have said, classical in his literary loyalties; and nothing could exceed the wicked delight with which he shows us all political economy lying folded up in a couplet of Goethe or in three threadbare hexameters of Horace. A copious creator of new terms, he invents one to characterise himself. It is the custom of authors to publish books in order to educate others: he publishes, however, solely to educate himself. He is, in scientific matters, a pure *égosophe*, who expounds his thought in order that it may be criticised and thereby made perfect. And if he refuses to influence opinion he is even more urgent to repel the notion that his theory can lead to revolutionary action. University professors—whose attitude towards burning questions is ever that of a cat towards hot soup—have ignored him because they believed

that a writer who laid such emphasis on the disharmonies and antagonisms of economic life must necessarily be a disturber of the peace. Such an idea is absurd. Effertz has a particular aversion and contempt for bombs and barricades. "It is only a partial knowledge of social antagonisms that can lead men to desire a revolution. The best way to make revolutions unpopular, and to create a sedative temper of reform, is to furnish a complete picture of these antagonisms." An agitator who has heard of only a single "class-war" is in danger of believing that the source of this class-war may be swept away for ever, and humanity definitively redeemed with the flame and fanfare of one great upheaval. It is an illusion that still exists, and that must be banished. What can be more potent to banish it than a Sociology which exhibits economic disharmony not as an isolated and destructible fortress of privilege, but as a vast labyrinth co-extensive with society? For men who respect their intellects only one honourable path is open, the path of peaceful reform.

After such an overture the fundamental ideas of Effertz must seem bare and simple. His system is characterised by M. Andler as the most vigorous attempt ever made to constitute a science of Pure Economics. By this term he understands the analysis and interpretation of those economic facts which exist independently not alone of the special juridical system of any state, but also of the processes of exchange.

Denuded then to its ultimate skeleton, economic life manifests itself as a drama, which, like the French stage, has its "eternal triangle." Land, labour, and consumption are the three apex-points about which all economies function, be they primitive or advanced. The collaboration of labour with land to produce a utility is the foundation of all systems. Every good contains a certain quantity of labour and a certain quantity of land, but no good contains anything else. In the metaphor of Petty labour is the father, and land is the mother of all wealth. This analysis of production is, we may agree with Effertz, the most worn and battered commonplace of all the text-books. Every theorist has seen it, but hardly one has consistently believed it. To anybody who grasps it steadily the dictum on which Marx builds his whole system comes as an amazing counter-sense. "If, then, we leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities," writes Marx in the indispensable first chapter of *Das Kapital*, "they have only one common property left, that of being products of labour."

Marxian Socialism is by this principle, the Ponocratic illusion, involved in strange absurdities. It would, for instance, necessitate the exchange of three or four bullocks for one good book; since the "labour certificates," which are to be the measure of exchange, would show that the named quantities of these very diverse products embodied equal quantities of labour.

The ratio between literature and beef might indeed be even more favourable to the former on the score of the superior skill of the labour concerned. Obviously commodities have another common property; each of them embodies a certain quantity of land. In any given process of consumption—say that of bread—we bite the dust in an unsuspected sense, we are veritable eaters of earth. And the earth being very far from infinite this fact is of dominant importance in all economies. Effertz confesses with surprise that for once literature fails him. While every language has a phrase like *manger du travail* or *manger de la sueur* in currency, he cannot find either in the verses of the learned or in the proverbs of the people any locution such as *manger de la terre*. He coins it forthwith, with an explanation which affords such a good example of what one may term the conscientious nastiness of his science that it ought to be quoted here in its more or less decent veil of French. “Pour éviter les malentendus grossiers, je dois faire remarquer que si je dis ‘manger de la sueur, de la terre,’ je ne parle pas en *chimiste*; je ne parle pas de *géophagie*, et je ne fais pas allusion à la sueur matérielle qui est mélangée chimiquement avec presque toutes les denrées coloniales. Je parle en économiste et je pense à cette sueur et à cette terre qui sont renfermées métaphysiquement dans les biens.”

The relation of the three elements engaged may be expressed in mathematical or pseudo-

mathematical form. The final unknowns, positive and negative, of economic calculation are x = the utilities consumed by an individual in the unit of time, and y = the labour expended by the individual in the unit of time in the acquisition of these utilities. In calculating the curves, in which he forecasts the future of mankind, Effertz employs an armoury of some forty auxiliary symbols. On the technical side they constitute, indeed, so large a part of his work that his use of them ought to be illustrated. Designating, then, by w the utility of a good, by a the quantity of labour, and by b the quantity of land embodied in it, we are able to formulate an absolute value, not dependent on any special regime or even on exchange. This absolute value varies with the quotient, satisfaction : sacrifice. The productivity of any exploitation, or more generally of any form of economic organisation being represented by p , we arrive forthwith at the formula $p = \frac{w}{a + b}$. To maximise p , by weighting a and b with appropriate coefficients, and by understanding the psychological determinants of w , is the task laid upon all future governments. In discussing further the relation of a and b , Effertz makes his sole claim to originality. He has introduced two new principles into Sociology, the principle of conflict and the principle of incitation. Passing by the first of these for a moment, I shall try to explain the second. All previous economists have treated

the two factors of production as co-operating forces, the resultant of which is represented by a diagonal. But in point of fact, Effertz argues, the true relation is that of an inciting factor, labour, to an incited factor, land; and the economy which results corresponds not to the diagonal of the parallelogram of forces, but to what he styles a *décrochement*. One who is not an initiate in the Higher Mathematics had best seek refuge in the original "La production est le procès par lequel l'incitant travail décroche une valeur d'usage en incitant de la terre." The whip, he says, in a deliberately ludicrous image, is the inciting, the cab-horse the incited factor: you may manage with a smaller horse by using a larger whip; but no extension of the whip, even to infinity, will compensate for the total disappearance of the horse. This novel terminology and the mathematical exercises by which it is supplemented are not much dwelt upon by M. Landry. But it is difficult to see how any specialist in Mathematical Economics can, with due regard to his own competence, ignore the first section of *Les Antagonismes*. The third of the primordial elements *w*, or the utility of goods, has for Effertz found its final formulation in Daniel Bernouilli's *De Mensura Sortis*, published in 1738. Bernouilli's law contains for him all the truth and none of the confusion of the "marginal utility" theory of the Austrians. Analogous to the law of Weber and Fechner in Psycho-Physics, it asserts that the

subjective satisfaction produced by the objective consumption of a given quantity of any good is in inverse ratio to the quantity of the good already consumed. Furnished with this key to the variation of needs and desires, and with the coefficients representing skill, fertility and the like which qualify a and b in any concrete case, Effertz undertakes rather vainly to make his equations as accurate as those of Physics. Before passing from his elaborate analysis of exchange one ought, perhaps, to signalise the invention of the term *monoone*, or *monoony*, to designate a form of unilateral competition, which is the obverse of monopoly, and is almost as common. One seller confronting many buyers gives us a phenomenon of monopoly, one buyer confronting many sellers gives us a phenomenon of *monoony*. For the rest it is, perhaps, enough to say that in Pure Economics Effertz touches no question that he does not freshen; his discussions cast novel, though perhaps distorting, lights on the whole sub-structure of the science.

Every good is, as all economists have noted, a synthesis of labour with land, but the proportions in which these elements are combined vary over a very wide range. On closer scrutiny there emerges a fact which controls the whole future of humanity, whether under Socialism or under Individualism. It is this: generally speaking those goods which require for their production much land and comparatively little labour are articles of food, *biens d'alimentation*,

and those which require much labour and comparatively little land are instruments of culture or luxury, *biens de luxe ou de culture*. An instance already cited will serve here also—the contrast, namely, between bullock and books.

The variations of the quotient $\frac{b}{a}$ involve many important consequences. The first of these is enunciated by Effertz in what he calls the non-transformability or non-interchangeability of forms of production. Any given form of production, that is to say, cannot in general be transformed into any other, but only on condition that the quotient $b : a$ of the two is approximately the same. Effertz in his exposition distinguishes, but not quite clearly, between quantitative and qualitative variations of the land engaged in production. Judas, he points out, gave utterance to very feeble though very popular Economics in complaining that the precious ointment had not been converted into food for the poor. In this case the absurdity is obvious. Under our system of exchange you can substitute one commodity for another, and transfer the sin, if there be a sin, of luxury to somebody else; but by no chrematistic magic can you transform the first product into something so different in nature as the second. The more plausible fallacy, however, is that which regards, not products, but branches of production as interchangeable. This illusion beclouds the prophetic vision alike of the Malthusian pessi-

mists and the Socialistic optimists. The former imagine that when the pressure of over-population begins, every other branch of production will be transformed into the production of food, and that consequently the debacle to which mankind, increasing at its present rate, is in their view irredeemably committed will have famine only as its last phase. All culture, all luxury will have been thrown to the wolves before their fangs come abreast of the sleigh. The reply of Effertz is that if such a crisis is to come, it will not end but begin with hunger. The one category of goods of which there need never be a scarcity is that category which demands a great deal of labour, but little land—namely, goods of culture. The Socialists also, when confronted with a familiar criticism, reply in terms of the same fundamental error. Under your Socialism, says a critic, suppose that I call to your communistic store with a bunch of labour-notes and ask for a bottle of bock. They have no bock, but they offer me a copy of Marx, of which there is a superabundance! What then? Nothing simpler, reply the Socialists. You write to the Minister of Production, Department of Transformations: he gives instructions to divert some labour from printing and publishing to agriculture and brewing; and next season there will be no shortage of bock. But No! says Effertz, you are working on a groundless assumption. You can transform a production of *Das Kapital* into one of *Harmonies Economiques*, or one of bock into

one of milk or cider. But you cannot transmute a production, in which very little land and a great deal of labour are required, into one that demands very little labour but a great deal of land. Ponocratic Socialism will discover in such a juncture, that by founding its currency solely on one of the primordial elements, it has exhausted the other, it will have eaten up imprudently its whole allowance of land.

In this reiterated sentence we come upon Effertz' reason for positing antagonism of interest as an ultimate and unchangeable factor in human society. *Homo homini lupus* is the law that emerges from every analysis of consumption. Who touches this book, said Whitman, touches a man. But with Effertz to eat a potato is to eat a man, or at least the potential existence of a man. He finds remorse and embarrassment mixed as ingredients in every plate of soup. "I cannot get rid of the thought that in eating I am destroying one of my fellows. I say to myself, indeed, that not to eat would be to destroy myself, and that I am worth as much as another. But I eat it with disgust, as if I had found a hair in it." Labour we must also consume, and so far forth every consumer is forced to "exploit" somebody. But at least there need be no remorse if one pays his score by furnishing to society as much productive labour as he consumes. In the world in which we live this is a difficult counsel. So many pleasant commodities, so many lucrative productions are

possible to us only on condition that others shall be given over to death, servitude, or dishonour. You accept, for instance, the Arab proverb that the Earthly Paradise is to be found on horseback. But since a horse consumes as much earth as would sustain three men, to keep a horse is to murder a family, to keep a stable is to maintain a sort of perpetual massacre. Nor is it to be supposed that this sombre halo attaches only to articles of luxury. Fishers must, indeed, be drowned in order that a rich woman may wear a rope of pearls, but fishers must also be drowned in order that a beggar may eat a herring. The shop-girl, who wears imitation lace, and the duchess, who wears real lace, condemn some of their sisters to slavery and exploitation with the same ruthless certainty. As for dishonour, society has grown itself a very rhinoceros hide of hypocrisies to protect us from the edged and miserable facts which cannot be denied. You must not let your right hand know what your left hand does, nor whisper in your drawing-room what you thunder in your office. Public opinion agrees to equate honour with income, and to employ between friends the suaver synonym. There is a nice gradation in these things :—

Mein Sohn, o lern das Leben kennen !
Gar vornehm ist es Schnaps zu brennen ;
Bedenklich schon ihn zu verkaufen,
Und ganz-erbärmlich ihn zu—saufen.

If there is, however, a certain ultimate antago-

nism, woven into the fabric of reality, there are many secondary antagonisms which result merely from the property basis on which contemporary societies agree to stand. In his social pathology Effertz proceeds, in his own characteristic way, upon certain ideas of Rodbertus. Like the latter he finds the main source and cause of economic disharmonies in the almost universal clash between *rentabilité* and *productivité*. Under our regime of exchange the production of commodities is governed not by the needs of men, but by the fluctuations of the market. The individual producer obtains his maximum income in many cases not by maximising but, on the contrary, by restricting production. The earlier strategy of the speculator in this regard was brutal and elementary : it consisted in the material destruction of products. The lesson taught by the Sibyl—namely, that a monopolist can exact the same price for three as for twelve articles—was well learned by Rome. The manipulation of the grain market, by the burning of superabundant supplies, was so commonly practised as to evoke legislation providing severe penalties for this *crimen dardanariatus*, as it was named after Dardanarius, its inventor. The Middle Ages found themselves still confronted by the *dardanarius*, and burned him alive when occasion offered ; and Effertz asserts that even to-day in the East the rice market, and in certain Dutch colonies the spice market, are subject to the same gross and barbaric methods. Modern specula-

tion is more subtle and more effective : it understands how to hold back, and hold up supplies, without destroying them. No consumer can stretch out a hand without coming against one mesh or another of the network of *quasi-dardanariatus* in which it has enveloped the world. This is the deepest disharmony, but there are many others. Present is at war with future : the wasteful technique of American agriculture, for instance, maximises production for one generation, but leaves an exhausted soil to the next. There is a war between true interest and imaginary interest, even for a man who has deliberately chosen egotism for his guide : even on his own low plane he is continually deluded by our chrematistic, modern habit of mind. Every man, labouring under higher ideals, bears about in his soul a far fiercer war between the economic and the gamic virtues. He has two soul-sides, one to cheat, exploit, and subjugate the world with in order that the other may shower luxury and advancement on his household. The only variation is between that struggle in which the object is destruction, and that in which the object is domination. Competition between one employer and another, or one worker and another within the same trade, supplies an example of the first. Its motto is : *Des einen Brod ist des anderen Tod*, bread to one man is death to another. Conflicts between a capitalist and a labour syndicate exemplify the second. The watchword in this case is : *Des einen Brod ist des*

anderen Noth, one man's plenty is another man's famine. In one or other of these forms the fact of antagonism is written in a flaming and sinister scribble over the whole map of our modern economy. The masters of that economy, sniffing the gold coins in their palms, echo the Cæsar's *non olet*. But that is a judgment of chemistry, not of ethics. To a mind once shaken out of our habitual, dogmatic drowse all money appears tainted, every sovereign stinks. We have created a civilisation of great and cruel splendour, and written over its gate : *No gentleman need apply*.

Out of this base labyrinth there is only one clew that can be safely followed, that of Pono-Physiocratic Socialism. The weakness of popular Socialism by no means lies in its supposed inability to maintain production at the maximum. In comparison with our present industrial system it offers a clear superiority, consequent on the removal of all conflict between *rentabilité* and *productivité*, between lucrative and productive exploitation. The true and fatal flaw is to be found in the proposed mechanism of exchange. This flaw is now for the first time removed. The impossibility of the Marxian labour-certificates having been demonstrated, Effertz proceeds to outline what Andler styles a bimetallism of land and labour. Under this system all articles are to be double-ticketed, so as to show their cost in land and their cost in labour ; and no article is to be sold in exchange for wage-certificates of one kind only. In issuing land certificates,

which are, so to say, a free bonus given to the worker in addition to his labour-certificates, the State will keep steadily before its mind the territorial area at its command, and will be able to control the increase of population and to avert famine. It will be able further, without invading the personal liberty of the citizens, to impel their labour, as the need may be, towards production for the sake of culture or production for the sake of sustenance. The general effect will be to equalise the distribution of the necessities of physical life. This will provide—in accordance with the only defensible statement of the materialistic interpretation of history—the negative conditions of culture. Its positive reality and richness and the actual distribution of *biens de culture* will follow a law determined by the genius and ideals of individual intellects. On the material side Pono-Physiocratic Socialism will give equality to the equal, on the mental side it will give inequality to the unequal. This accords with all our experience. Even in present conditions a capitalist consumes little more land than a workman : like Napoleon he can dine only once in the day. His main consumption is labour, his main motive is ostentation, his main instrument of acquisition is mere money and the chrematistic illusion. His psychology differs organically from that of the workman. “The worker perishes when he no longer has soup to eat. The capitalist perishes when he no longer has Sèvres ware in which to offer soup to his

parasites." Under the system of Effertz both of them will have soup, since all men need soup ; as for the Sèvres, it can only be acquired by a citizen who is able to supply society with labour as skilled and intellectual as that which produced it. A larger hope for all unfolds itself in the consideration that in a progressive nation, while the curve of goods of sustenance no sooner climbs to its maximum than it is dragged down again by growing weight of population, the curve of goods of culture ought to maintain a continuous ascent approximating to a straight line. Therein lies the rule of life of the honourable, and the ambition of the wise. The luxury of a Lassalle, little though it may dim the brilliance of that splendid and reckless spirit, compromises the whole cause of Socialism. If you would be master of the future you must rather choose for your pattern Spinoza, who built his great basilica of metaphysics on twopence a day.

Effertz, with an amiable weakness not infrequent among his countrymen, admits that he may well be regarded as the Kant of Sociology. As Kant opened a new path between dogmatism and scepticism by posing sacramentally and *in sede materiae* the question of the limits of attainable human knowledge, so Effertz, by posing in the same solemn fashion the question of the limits of attainable human happiness, opens a new path between optimism and pessimism. He founds the Critical School of Sociology. The

fashion in which he answers his own question has already been indicated. But in believing himself to be impartial he is deeply wrong : his place is with the pessimists. No other judgment is possible to any one who has toiled through the grey, chill, and intricate galleries of his thought. In his vision, even the light counterfeits a gloom. Asking with Faust : Was kann die Welt mir wohl gewähren ? he answers with Faust ! Entehren sollst du, sollst entehren. With Schiller he declares that life is error and illusion, and that only in death do we lay hold on reality. " Humboldt writes somewhere that the greatest happiness possible to any human being is to be born an imbecile, since only an imbecile can live without coming to understand the truth of things. This observation holds good in general, but it is specially applicable to the study of society. Those who have lifted the veil of sociological truth, those who have eaten the fruit of the tree of Sociology, can never again be happy. A veil was thrown over the image of Saïs, because that image represented—Truth." It would be easy, and quite true, to say that the pessimism of Effertz results from a mistake of fact, taken too seriously. High authorities can be cited to show that the menace of famine, which obsesses him, is so remote as not properly to enter into the present thought of humanity. It would be easy, and quite idle, to observe that the man who analyses is lost, and that the only counsel of happiness is to feel feelings and enjoy enjoyments.

Optimism and pessimism are, perhaps, primary colours of mind, positive and negative polarities which we can only accept without understanding. They are, it may be, the day and the night of the human spirit, established for an eternal contrast and counterchange ; and Effertz fulfils the destiny of a man born under the sun's eclipse. Optimist or pessimist matters little in a life marshalled under the trumpet of duty : your emotions are your own, and you are free to feel that all the problems that beset us are insoluble on condition that you help to solve them. To this task Effertz has bent a strong and subtle mind. While he has not made Socialism more tolerable he has at least made it more acute, and his contribution to Pure Economics possesses a high value, not at all dependent on his practical creed. *Les Antagonismes* with its keen sense of the fundamental, its harsh courage, its store of rich and strange observation, cannot fail to count for something, nor can any economist afford to pass by in complete silence the system of Otto Effertz, Gentleman Socialist.

1910.

ON WRITTEN
CONSTITUTIONS

ON WRITTEN CONSTITUTIONS

I agree that it is most unfortunate that we should have to introduce at any time a written provision into an unwritten constitution. (Hear, hear).—Mr. Haldane in the House of Commons.

MR. HALDANE is a formidable rather than a popular speaker, an authority but not an inspiration. It is, of course, a question of personality. He looks like a composite photograph of six German philosophers, with a varnish of Renan, and that is not a bad beginning. But that singular voice of his which comes piping out of rotundity is too thin, light, and metaphysical ever to be a trumpet of democracy. It is in vain that all men concede him the aureole of omniscience. It is in vain that the House rejoices to see in his radiant presence a refutation of the epigram in which Ecclesiastes declares that increase of knowledge means increase of sorrow. He stirs the imagination to pleasant pictures. To me, he is always some friar of the Ingoldsby Legends lilting black-letter Statutes and Gothic ideologies to the music of a penny whistle.

But with all that blithe omniscience, he remains formidable rather than effective. His speech of the other night, from which the sentence at the head of this column is quoted, ran counter to the sense of his own party. It was delivered with a sort of fatal serenity, and received in, what is called, courteous silence. But that particular sentence was greeted, as it always is greeted in the House of Commons, with a regular musketry-rattle of "Hear, hear." It seems to me not unapt to the times to analyse these "Hear, hears."

The prejudice against written constitutions is, beyond doubt, one of the best established superstitions of English politics. Every law student, nurtured on that masterpiece of romance, Dicey's *Law of the Constitution*, has in his day written essays in praise of the spontaneous and elastic system under which we are supposed to live. He has been taught to believe that every Continental jurist looks with envy and despair from his own miserable paper guarantees of freedom to this organic body which has grown with the growth, and strengthened with the strength of the British nation. And somehow it is suggested that, as Lohengrin had to disappear on being forced to give his name and address, so the magic of the English constitution would disappear if it were written down. Hence these "Hear, hears."

Now I wish to submit, and by no means respectfully, that this traditional view is little

better than stately nonsense. Continental jurists do not envy England. They say: "Truly, my friend, the British constitution would, without doubt, be admirable. But, alas! it does not exist." The writing down of custom and practice is not a misfortune, but a most happy achievement. And in dealing with England you are dealing not with an unwritten, but with a badly written, constitution. This last point demonstrates itself. How do you go about to prove the provisions of your unwritten Constitution? By an appeal to Magna Charta. But Magna Charta is a document, not a custom. By an appeal to the "Indemnity of Parliament" of 1407, to the Resolution of 1640, to the Resolution of 1671, to the Resolution of 1678. These are strange elements to appear in an unwritten constitution. Take away the scribe, the Commons clerk, and the printer, and neither Indemnity nor Resolution would exist or operate to-day.

The amusing truth is that this myth of an unwritten English constitution, with its whole virtue residing in the fact that it was unwritten, was invented by an Irishman. Edmund Burke invented it because it happened to give him a good debating-point against the French Revolution. But why should our radical legates of the French Revolution cling to it as tenderly as to a memory of their childhood? They ought, on the contrary, to say: "Since so much has been written, let us write the rest, and write it clearly."

One has no difficulty in believing that Simon de Montfort had a certain weakness for unwritten constitutions, but that was only because, in all probability Simon de Montfort did not himself write or read with any comfort. But the whole colour of the times has changed. Writing, which in those far-off days was the special magic of a small caste, is the common form of modern democracy. Before the Print Age, to rely on documents rather than on custom would have been esoteric. Since the Print Age, to rely on custom rather than on documents is mere antiquarian pedantry.

The two opposite mistakes have this in common: they are, both of them, modes of keeping government separated from the dust, the tumult, and the heartiness of common life. That is the aim of Toryism; and Tory constitutionalists like Mr. Dicey are singing in the key of their policy when they sing the praises of tacit agreements, accepted conventions, and the other elements of unwritten constitutions. But when Mr. Haldane joins the chorus, he is, I submit, engaging in high treason against those two born Progressives, the pen and the printing-press. The pen in old days was the jousting lance; the Press in these days is the armoured Dreadnought of Radicalism.

There is nothing peculiarly English in this dread of documents. It is a characteristic of all primitive societies. You have one form of the superstition in the Arab who expects to be cured—

and often is cured!—by rolling a piece of paper with a doctor's prescription on it up into a ball and swallowing it. You have another in the contemporary farmer who cannot be induced to keep accounts. He prefers to work on an unwritten constitution, "like his father before him." The result is that when he gets to the Bankruptcy Court he has to go without even the poor consolation enjoyed by the rest of us—namely, an exact knowledge of how he got there. Within the field of law itself the whole movement is from custom and the spoken word to Statute and the written word. If not, why is it that when you have made a contract over the telephone you immediately dictate a letter embodying its terms, and send it off by the evening post?

The same thing holds true of industry and commerce. Everywhere the formula, the diagram, the blue drawing, the visible, written, permanent word have triumphed. In commerce, to take an example from history, Venice owed her greatness partly, no doubt, to geography, but largely also to book-keeping. Venice held the Golden East in fee because her merchants were the first to abandon the old unwritten constitution of hand-to-mouth trading in favour of double-entry book-keeping. Her flaming pageant, in which life and art mingled their frontiers inseparably, was organised by the glorious clerks who wrote down her accounts in a large, legible hand. The splendour of Titian

was nothing more than the flowering of a ledger.

Toryism has imaged the vague, unwritten regime, which is its opportunity, as a natural and organic growth. But change the image. Say instead that it is like music-hall patter, made up as one goes along. Say that it is like an extempore speech, and that extempore speeches are always bad. Say that it is, so far, the mere nebula and protoplasm of freedom to which this age must give clear articulation and definite form. All the tides are flowing in that direction. Within the last ten years England has made constitutions for Australia, for the Transvaal, for the Orange River, for United South Africa. It is time that she made a Constitution for herself, guarding liberty with a quantitative formula. And that will help us all to join in making a Constitution for Ireland.

1910.

BODY *v.* SOUL



BODY v. SOUL

FOR THE PLAINTIFF : FRANCIS THOMPSON

FRANCIS THOMPSON is known to us as perhaps the most wastefully abundant imagination of the present day. He has taken the sun for patron, and all his poetry welters with the sun's fervour and fecundity. They are in his very style and wordy vesture, that imperial style of his into which he has adopted purple Latinities as aptly as the Church has adopted the stateliness of the Roman paenula. But we must be on our guard against his splendours ; we must not let them betray us into construing his work as mere literature. One fears that some delusion of the kind has captured many of those who praise him. They have praised him as a lord of language, a tyrant of images, and it has hardly occurred to them to search out the spirit behind the grandiose ceremonial. It is possible, it is even certain, that many readers of such a poem as *The Hound of Heaven* have exulted in its tidal flux without taking it to mean anything in particular. But that is not the colour of the poet's own mind. He has never spoken for the

sake of speaking, but always because he had something to say. "What, after all," says Brunetière, "is poetry but a metaphysic made manifest through sensible images?" Great poetry surely is; if not a criticism, it is a vision of life, of the structure and basal laws of life. When a man's eyes have been once opened the common day flames and vibrates with bladed chariots. The most insignificant object or experience stands vested with endless relations, or rather there is nothing that can any longer be called insignificant. The lightest caprice of love has its metaphysical implications, and to salute a primrose is to proclaim a philosophy. We all understand this, or at least our wise memories do, in their choice of what to reject and what to retain. That poetry alone lives in us which is so great that it has forgotten to be poetic. We think of its sincerity, its absolute truth, or what other word we grasp at to describe what cannot be described, not of its technical deftness or even mastery. A something has come upon and transmuted it, it shines with the light of glorification. Francis Thompson has always understood this. Painting the veil of life with colours dipped out of the rising and the setting of the sun, he has known that nothing was of any account save what lay behind the veil, the spiritual interpretation that can never be wholly expressed. Earth and all the business of earth have been to him at once a spectacle and a sacrament. His work belongs less to literature than to mysticism. Do we not think of it as of

something essentially hieratic, full of costly spices, brought out of the East, of figured chasubles, and full of the mysteries of grace ?

It was necessary to bring all this back to mind in order to induce the mood in which the little book before us must be considered.* For it is no casual bye-product of the writer's mind, as might possibly be suspected from its appearance in a series, very aptly called "The Science of Life Series." It is thorough Thompson. The author has simply picked out a certain drift of thought which lies implicit in all his poetry, and supported it by instances and considerations drawn from many quarters. Such a prosifying of intuitions has an interest quite apart from its subject matter. It helps to dispel the notion that poetry comes irresponsibly out of the air, and not reflectively out of the stuff of everyday ; and it shows the supreme reasonableness, the gross commonsense, of mysticism. But we must not stray aside, though it were, like the Crusaders, to capture Constantinople. The book is simply a brief study of the terms prescribed by ascetical tradition to keep the peace between those ally-enemies, Soul and Body, with a plea for a new Concordat to meet new conditions. Mr. Thompson is on the side of the body ; in the interests of the spirit itself he demands a more

* *Health and Holiness.* A Study of the Relations between Brother Ass, the Body, and his Rider, the Soul. By Francis Thompson. Burns and Oates. 1s. and 2s.

clement regime and never did cause rejoice in an abler advocate. He has the incommunicable gift of the phrase, the phrase that is like a key-stone to knit together fabrics of experience, like a cavalry-charge to drive an argument home. The task of summarising him is therefore extremely difficult, and I shall try to do no more than convey in general terms the point of view from which he justifies and ennobles Brother Ass.

In so far as he pleads for a mildening of the discipline of the religious orders we have no concern to follow him. Some have already relaxed, others are in the train of relaxing their first austerity ; and there must always be some that will preserve it to be a refuge for those virile and passionate souls who thirst for brimmed measures of expiation, and are able to bear them. "The weltering problem of secular religion," is, as the writer says, quite enough for us. Take the unheroic, modern man, with all his aches and pains, and ask what is religion to make of him. What asceticism must be adopted so as to make him an instrument capable of divine melodies ?

For the soul is to the body, as the breath is to the
flute,
Both together make the music, either marred and all
is mute.

And first, how does this modern body stand in its internal self ? Surely, as Mr. Thompson says, it is "an etiolated body of death." The nerves

of the twentieth century have gone bankrupt. Life has become too elaborate and too exacting for them ; they have gone down under the iron rod of erudition and the whip of practical labour. The age's characteristic cry is the cry of disease. Men go about making public confession of their ailments, or, delivered from them, gather disciples to the gospel of the perfect digestion. Patent medicines are invested by their sellers with an all-sufficiency that would have made Paracelsus blush for his modesty. Commissions are appointed to enquire into Physical Degeneration. The army authorities cry out that it is impossible to find recruits who are even good enough to be food for powder. Schools for Physical Culture multiply, in England at least, with a rapidity which illustrates, as even the three hundred religious sects did not, that great people's genius for dissension. No alert man has time to consider anything, save what he shall eat and what he shall drink, and wherewith he shall be clothed. We go about creepily conscious of the iniquities of our livers, and of the freaks of our subliminal selves. For alike from the physical side and from the mental come physicians, Christian Scientists, Hypnotists, Will-Developers, Faith-Healers—it is beyond human power to name the innumerable brood. There is an association in America, whose members are pledged to spend an hour every week wishing fellow-members good health and good fortune. The annual subscription is only

a dollar, and this will be returned if within a year one does feel appreciably better, and obtain a "rise."

It is a *Danse Macabre*, with an interfusion of the crudest farce. But it is difficult to find much relief in the humorous mask of it. That mask drops off, and abandons us to something not far from terror. Cerebral physiology, psychiatry as it is pursued, not in shilling treatises, but in the schools, begins to disclose more fully the inter-relations of mind and body; and the awful delicacy of the instrument on which we play, its complex fallibility comes near overwhelming us. It is something we have read about in the text-books, how "a brain-fever changed a straight-walking youth into a flagitious and unprincipled wastrel. And recently," adds Mr. Thompson, "we had the medically-reported case of a model lad, who, after an illness, proved a liar and a pilferer." Or it is somebody we have known, flaming, impetuous, who was pushing on by forced marches to his goal; and then his outraged body turned traitor, and the world had come to an end for him. The brain has become the theatre of a tragedy which is continually renewed. "How remote we are," cries out Guyau in his poignant speech "from the naïve perception of the primitive world which located the soul in the breast, or, it may be, even in the stomach! It is, as we know, the brain that thinks, it is the brain that suffers, it is the brain that throbs with the torment of the

Unknown, it is the brain that is signed with the sacred wound of the Ideal, it is the brain that quivers under the beak of the winged and ravening intellect. In the mountains of Tartary the traveller sometimes sees a strange animal leap panting by in the greyness of the dawn. The great eyes, strained wide with suffering, are those of an antelope ; but as the hoofs thud by, the ground beneath trembling like a heart in agony, two huge wings are seen wildly beating to and fro above the head which they seem to lift up and on. The antelope dashes madly down the winding valley, leaving a red trail on the rocks, staggers, falls, and the two great wings soar up from the antlers, disclosing the eagle which, with talons sunk deep in the skull, had been devouring the brain and the life of the antelope." The parable would come with a familiar air to Mr. Thompson, for it is obvious that either from great sympathy or from sharp experience he knows all these secrets of the prison-house. He is cognisant of lives that have become a dread Rosary in which there are only sorrowful mysteries. Has not he himself written of one who

Paced the places infamous to tell,
Where God wipes not the tears from any eyes ?

He comes in this book to write of these things in plain prose, to consider how they can be wrought up into religion, and whether sanctity may not have in it a tonic quality. The demand

which he makes of the life, whether of the saint or of the rest of us, is simply that it shall live. "Holiness energises. The commonest of common taunts is that of 'idle monks,' 'lazy saints,' and the like. But, most contrary to that superficial taunt, a holy man was never yet an idle man and a saintly could never be an effete world." But I could not do justice to his thought without quoting in full those proud, trumpet-pages, in which he celebrates the "incidental greatness" of the saints when they turned half-disdainfully to secular pursuits—the lyric majesty of the Prophets, the Confessions of Augustine, the Hymn to the Sun of St. Francis of Assisi, the incomparable prose of St. Francis de Sales. The problem with us all, then, is to evoke from the federation of body and soul the fullest stream of energy, and to turn it to the highest ends; and to do this we must respect the laws and the limitations of both. The body is like a wick immersed in the oil of the spirit—it was Heine's image—and "though the oil can immensely energise and prolong the life of the wick, it is on that corporeal wick, after all, that the flame of active energy depends." How then is our end to be accomplished?

Not by the heroic maceration of the first or the middle ages. The asceticism of these days, transmitted to us in the discipline of the Orders, was framed for men of robust mould and unspeakably less sensitive nerves. Their obstacle was that of opulence; they served God, as they

forswore Him, with wasteful thoroughness. Our obstacle is that of poverty. Our ancestors put out their follies at compound interest and we are reaping the harvest. The human frame has, Mr. Thompson believes, under this burden and under the complications of modern life suffered a radical diminution of sheer vital power. No faculty has increased except the faculty of suffering, for in the elaboration of its nerves it has become, as it were, soaked in mind. It cries out not for a curb against the excess of its passions, but for the energy to be passionate at all. "Merely to front existence, for some, is a surrender of self, a choice of ineludibly rigorous abnegation." Surely then we must treat our bodies after another fashion than that of old if we are to make them fit receptacles for sanctity? Mr. Thompson thinks so, and he has discovered a wise director of souls, the late Archbishop Porter, S.J., who thought with him. "Better to eat meat on Good Friday," writes the Archbishop, "than to live in war with every one about us. I fear much you do not take enough food and rest. You stand in need of both, and it is not wise to starve yourself into misery." And he prescribes Vichy and Carlsbad against a visitation of evil thoughts. It is an asceticism no less than the other, and no less difficult. We must study to take our bodies with that shrewd and half humorous gravity which we find in nearly all the wise, and to rule by obeying them. "That the demon could have been

purged from Saul by medicinal draughts," writes Mr. Thompson in a sentence worthy of Sir Thomas Browne, "were a supposition too much in the manner of the Higher Criticism." But Dryden tells us that whenever "he had a poem to write"—divine tradesman—he chose that method of depurating his spirit. It is hardly a point to dwell on. But let us put an end to the old boycott of the body. Let us be tender and thrifty of its forces. In the strange commerce of spirit and matter, a holiday, prudently taken, may be not only better than a half-done duty, but better even than a wandering prayer.

Such is the drift of *Health and Holiness*, and no one who has any appreciation of the grounds on which it rests will be likely to dispute the conclusion. As against the practice of certain Orders it may be a necessary protest; and there is no head of a convent or college (so long engaged in the great Intermediate conspiracy) but will profit by reading it. We laymen must look to ourselves, and the Church, as we know her, is amply indulgent. She does not debilitate us with fasts and penances. What is of far deeper interest than these special applications of it is the noble philosophy which glimpses through the book. The temper of Plotinus, who was so shamed of his body that he always refused to disclose the date or place of his birth, possesses, of course, a relative truth, but it has been far too dominant within the Church. We

have forgotten that the Scholastics built psychology on the *compositum humanum*, the dual unit of soul and body. We have forgotten that the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, or remembered it only at catechism time. But so it is, and in the light of this interpretation the trivialities of every-day shine with an unsuspected poetry. It is an interpretation confirmed by all our fairest instincts. Most of us have had moments when sensations of which we are commonly a little ashamed lost their supposed grossness, when a cup of milk drunk among the mountains had in it a lyric ecstasy, and the least spiritual of the senses was transfused with spirit. I do not speak of those experiences which Coventry Patmore touched with the rapture of his vision ; but in his poem *To the Body* the whole essence of *Health and Holiness* is to be found. As men come back to the simplicities of life their minds grow more habitable to thoughts like these. The growing nausea of cities, the desire to live in the nearer intimacy of air and earth, the yearning for physical health, of which I have spoken, are all symptoms of a veritable rehabilitation of the body. What could be more appropriate than that a poet should come at this moment to confirm the indispensable truth amid many extravagances, and to Christianise what otherwise tends to the most naïve Paganism ?

Mr. Thompson has his vision of the future. "The remedy for modern lassitude of body, for modern weakness of will, is Holiness. . . .

Of the potency, magisterial, benevolent, even tyrannous, which goes forth from the spirit on the body, we have but young knowledge. Nevertheless, it is in rapid act of blossoming. Hypnotism, faith-healing, radium—all these, of such seeming multiple divergence, are really concentrating their rays upon a common centre. When that centre is divined, we shall have scientific witness, demonstrated certification, to the commerce between body and spirit, the regality of will over matter. . . . Then will lie open the truth which now we can merely point to by plausibilities, and fortify by instances, that sanctity is medicinal, Holiness a healer. . . . Health, I have well-nigh said, is Holiness. What if Holiness be Health? . . .” Have we not all a forecast of some such perfect marriage of soul and body, in which the two will be no more at war than thought with word? It is vouchsafed to us here and there in a gracious example, some saint whose every action is ordered with a divine courtesy, some lady who seems to live to an ever-sounding, interior music. Perhaps it is a dream of the glorified rather than of the earthly body; but let us hear the poets when they describe it, lest we should not recognise our inheritance when it comes to us.

It is curious to compare Francis Thompson's vision with that of Guyau, most spiritual of evolutionists. “Pleasure, even physical pleasure growing more and more delicate, and mingling with moral ideas, will become more and more

esthetic ; we see as the ideal term of evolution a race to which every pleasure will be beautiful, every agreeable action artistic. We should then be like those instruments, which are so amply sonorous, that it is impossible to touch them without evoking a sound of musical value ; the lightest stimulus would set in vibration the depths of our moral life. . . . Art will no longer stand severed from life ; our consciousness will have grown so vast and so delicate as to be ever alert to the harmony of life, and all our pleasures will bear the sacred seal of beauty."

They are alike ideals ; but they help in very different ways to keep alive in us that curiosity which is the seed of the future, and to remind us that man, if not in this life perfectible, is capable of endless progress. The superiority of the Catholic poet is that he reinforces the natural will by waters falling an infinite height from the infinite ocean of Spirit. He has two worlds against one. If we place our Fortunate Islands solely within the walls of space and time, they will dissolve into a mocking dream ; for there will always be pain that no wisdom can assuage. They must lie on the edge of the horizon with the glimmer of a strange sea about their shores, and their mountain peaks hidden among the clouds.

1905.

REVERIES OF ASSIZE



REVERIES OF ASSIZE

IT is the last day of the Winter Assizes. If you want a metaphor to drape it in, you may call it the punitive clearing-house of Society. The cheques of crime come in, with sinister crinklings and rustlings, to receive the cancelling stamp which announces that in six months or twenty years—or, it may be, three weeks, with a hempen halter at the end—the criminal will have cleared his account with the State. He may then begin anew . . . if he be sufficiently alive. There is no tragic strain in the air as the sentenced prisoners pass out of the dock to lose their freedom, their clothes, their tobacco, and their names for the stated period. They do not, as that young reporter racing over the last page of his flimsy is sure to write, “appear to realise their position.” They are only the raw material of tragedy. They have never, like you and me, read Gorky in bad English. They have not participated in the revival of Greek drama ; nor even, with the aid of a free pass, studied the free passions of the Stage Society.

So placed, you would, doubtless, gather about you the purple folds of a sorrow so terrible as to swallow up all remembrance of its cause, and I

would mimic wicked marquises who went to the tumbrils with a fine phrase and an incomparable gesture. But the Enemy of Society now in the dock, in course of receiving seven years, is probably wondering under his yellow and scrubby face how the skilly will taste, and whether they will wash him very hard in jail.

Seven or eight days in an Assize Court help one to understand the anarchist and his attitude towards crime. The theorists of Anarchism propose to sweep away the whole traditional, minute machinery of penal law, and leave the criminal to the spontaneous justice of his neighbours. It may be that the neighbours will lynch a child-beater, and, shrouding their faces before a supreme anguish, will let a man who has killed go free. They will take a human, not a juridical view of things. But be that as it may, one does feel intensely that these legal forms and moulds are too narrow, too icily definite, too blank to psychology to contain the passionate chaos of life that is poured into them. Think of the colossal pretensions of this courthouse—this drab granite building, with the unwashed mud on its pavements, and the susurrus of crowds that sweat and chatter about it! It is a temple to the Problem of Evil. It is a temple to the Problem of Evidence. It is a Temple to the Mystery of Death. And when you have uttered these three words you have called up the whole moral, intellectual, and metaphysical life of humanity.

If it were not contempt of court you would

rise up and cry out to all these actors—judge, jury, counsel, prisoner, policemen—that the tragic halo is about their heads. You would recall them to the bitter greatness which they seem to have forgotten. Sad-robed priests—if your vision could be made fact—would chant prayers around the smoke of consecrated censers in the Doric portico of this Temple of Fear. And the prisoner, sinner and victim at once, would go to his doom covered with pity as with sacrificial garlands.

You may be quite certain that none of these things will happen. There is no provision made for them in Stephens' *Digest of the Criminal Law*, or in Archbold on *Evidence*. To imagine them is to welcome the decadence. But then, as you look up at the bench, your eye is caught by a veritable, decadent touch—the judge's flowers. I do not know whether it is part of the ritual or not, but I have never been at a Criminal Assizes without seeing that incongruous bunch of flowers—this time they are ragged, white chrysanthemums in a vase of blue china—beside the inkpot in which the judicial pen is dipped as it takes notes of the evidence or records the conviction. It reminds one of Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*, Blossoms of Sin.

But, after all, you may expect anything of the judge. He is a wild symbolist. He wears scarlet to manifest the wrath of the law, and ermine for the purity of the law—a spotted purity, to guess from the specimen before us—

and a black cap by times for the gloom of death. Probably there is some guarded mystery in the number of curls in his wig of white horse-hair. And the policemen—it is in Ireland, but crime is as cosmopolitan as money!—are admirable studies in silver and jet; especially the district inspectors, with their braided hussar-jackets and the gleam of chains and brooch-buckles upon them. It seems an artistic impertinence that crime should lift its shaggy head against so many perfumed people, dressed out in such splendid raiment. But great as are the virtues of uniform, they do not quite reach to the total extinction of evil.

You had a sense of utter futility as you listened to the steady, infinitesimal drip of evidence. It was like the nagging and pecking patter of thin rain on a hat. It proved everything with absolute conclusiveness except the moral guilt of the prisoner. You have the same sense of the emptiness of criminology as a pale, sensitive face appears above the spikes of the dock. He might be a poet, an Assisi peasant turned saint, but certainly there is no signature of crime in his visage. As a matter of fact, he stabbed a neighbour to death because of a difference of opinion as to the rate of wages in North Carolina. It seems a poor reason enough. To act like that is to take truth too heavily, and life too lightly. Besides, there are plenty of things to quarrel about at home without going to Carolina, North or South.

How did the prisoner come to do it? You can see that he is as puzzled to answer the question as anybody else. He stands in the dock clasping and unclasping the fingers of that horrible right hand which held the knife. It seems to him a foreign body : it is surely not his ? The late Mr. Browning, perhaps, could explain it. After all, if any truth is of any importance, every truth is of infinite importance. And think of the monstrous spectacle before Heaven of this dead man riding easily about the country sowing stories two dollars a week wrong as to the rate of wages in North Carolina ! How many destinies he might misshape with his eight-and-fourpenny error ! Well, he will propagate no more economic blunders. And his slayer will wear the yellow and arrowed jacket for ten years to come. But will that give back the dead disputant to the sunlight or to his wife ?

The courthouse is somehow growing too small. Your brain is growing too small. The world itself is too small for these explosive and shattering speculations. The judge is doing his best ; everybody is doing his best ; even Mr. Gladstone who undertakes in his Borstal repair-shops to patch up a moral personality, as good as new, for all and divers his Majesty's subjects in prison. If the thing is to be done at all it must be done after this fashion.

Certainly, one has no substitute to offer for this Judæo-Roman-English criminal law, and, perhaps, equally criminal civilisation. Still, one

is conscious of a vague protest against it all. In crime, in moral evil, the veiled destinies have set mankind a problem too hard to understand, too heavy to endure. For my part, I can only fall back on the serpent and the apple, and an obscure something which, as my Penny Catechism says, "darkened our understanding, weakened our will, and left in us a strong inclination to evil."

1909.

A NEW WAY
OF MISUNDERSTANDING
HAMLET

A NEW WAY OF MISUNDERSTANDING HAMLET

WHAT one felt most painfully at Mr. Harvey's recent performance of Hamlet was the artistic bankruptcy of the play. Of course no decent citizen confessed his boredom, because Shakespeare is the keystone of the conventions, a "national asset" as is said in England. But if art means freshness, words with raw, vivid sensation behind them, surprise and an element of strangeness? And what else does it mean? Already a hundred years ago the humane Charles Lamb was able to write that all the shining things in the play had been "so handled and pawed by declamatory boys and men" that for him they were "perfect dead members." And since then! The great Law of Ennui has vindicated itself even against Shakespeare. He has been mummified into an orthodoxy. He is a field for antiquarians, a proud heritage, an excuse for sumptuous scenery, but as an artist in the strict sense he hardly exists. Only one thing can restore him, a prolonged bath of oblivion. If he is to

be brought to life again he must be redeemed from his immortality, which will be better than to redeem his house from the Americans. Societies must be started to destroy his works, at all events to lose them for a hundred and fifty years, and so make it possible for unborn happier generations to come to him as to a fresh and breathing phenomenon. Failing that he must be excluded from all school and university courses, and forbidden under heavy penalties to any one not having attained his majority.

The pity is that, with the calamity of so long life, he should not have the happiness to be understood. The inky Dane, in especial, has had as evil fortune in this regard as if he had walked the actual earth and devoted himself to politics. Critic after critic has arisen to misrepresent him, and this secular misrepresentation has so crept into the empire of our imagination that direct vision of the play is impossible. Tieck's Hamlet we know, and Goethe's and Coleridge's and Mr. Tree's and Mr. Harvey's, but Shakespeare's Hamlet no man knows. Shakespeare's Hamlet, as a painful matter of fact, no man can ever know. We know how much sub-meaning and personal colour the same set of words takes on in different minds, and that these are never exactly what they were in the creator's mind. And then in Hamlet there is the added barrier of Elizabethan English, and the fact that Shakespeare is as topical as a pantomime. What each of us does is to construct a private under-

standing of Hamlet (which is certain to be a misunderstanding) out of materials furnished conjointly by ourselves, Shakespeare, a cloud of critics, and the actor who happens to be concrete before our eyes at the moment; and it is in confession of this, and not as a poor paradox, that the title of this paper has been devised.

The points I wish modestly to put forward here will be most intelligible as a comment on the popular reading. That reading has one merit at least, that of simplicity. According to it the plastic principle of the play, or rather the flaw that suffers it to stream down its ruinous course, is a vice of character—Hamlet's "inability to act." It is Goethe's "oak planted in a costly vase which should have only borne pleasant flowers"; it is Coleridge's "man living in meditation, called upon to act by every motive, human and divine, but the great object of whose life is defeated by continually resolving to do, yet doing nothing but resolve." These are the phrases that have captured the general mind, and flowed like a mist over the outlines of the play. But consider for a moment. Remembering Goethe's paltry performance—thanks to his superculture—in the liberation of Germany, and the lamentable life story of Coleridge, who can doubt that we have here not so much the poet's imagination as that of his critics? *Quicquid recipitur secundum modum recipientis*, we get out of things what we bring to them; and I submit that the apocalypse of

moral insufficiency discerned by these two eminent minds in Hamlet was brought with them in the satchels of their conscience. They are simply making General Confessions at the expense of the unfortunate Prince. Let us analyse this ^{the} interpretation popularised by them. The kernel of it is this. It demands in the place of Hamlet a crude, gory, gullible, instantaneous savage who not only believes in ghosts but lacks even the elementary savage's knowledge that there are evil as well as good ghosts, and whose will is hung on a hair-trigger dischargeable by the airiest impulse and subject to no restraint, moral or prudential. The commercial blandness with which people talk of Hamlet's "plain duty" makes one wonder if they recognise such a thing as plain morality. The "removal" of an uncle without due process of law and on the unsupported statement of an unsubpœnable ghost; the widowing of a mother and her casting-off as unspeakably vile, are treated as enterprises about which a man has no right to hesitate or even to feel unhappy. Because, meshed about with murder, adultery, usurpation, espionage, hypocrisy, and all other natural horrors, reinforced by the still greater horror of the supernatural, because in these cheerful conditions Hamlet is healthy-minded enough to grow "thought-sick," he is marked down as one "unstable as water." What bewilders most of all is that there lurks in the popular view (and I appeal to the general experience) a vague con-

viction that if Hamlet had only shown himself morally-fibrous enough, all the blood and tears would somehow have been averted and the curtain would fall on a serene Denmark.

I do not deny that a tragedy derived from superculture and a feeble will would be admirable. Indeed if it be wanted it can be found in the purest essence in Turgéneff's *Rudin*. But I submit that this is not the true ethos of *Hamlet*. I submit that *Hamlet*, so far from being the most "internal" of Shakespeare's plays, is nearly the most "external," and has for plastic principle not character but that veiled force which we call destiny. What, in fine, is it but a tale of justice, bloodily executed through what seem "accidental judgments, casual slaughters"? Such indeed was the reading of the Prince himself:—

"Heaven hath pleased it so
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister."

The problem is set wholly from the outside. It is not a product of Hamlet's superculture, but of the sin of his uncle and the lesser sin of his mother, and it is a problem so overwhelming that, however it be handled and by whatever type of character, it must issue in abundant tears and blood. What is claimed here for Hamlet's solution is, that it is the only one justified by the character of the evidence and the practical means at his command, and that, above all, it is justified by results. The destinies

approve and aid him, and when the curtain falls on a terrible harvest of horror we feel, nevertheless, a deep appeasement. The agony of Hamlet is over, the due ransom of sin has been paid with lives guilty and innocent, and with the inearthing of much moral refuse, the world sweeps into pure air again. The roll of Fortinbras' drums is not so much the irony as the recuperative force of life, lingering with praise over the body of him who has made recuperation possible.

This is a point which must not be ignored : the play ends, thanks to Hamlet's course of action, in absolutely the best way in which it could end. The king, of course, was due to the sword. But surely Gertrude also is better out of the world than in it ? Had she lived there was nothing but the gnawing of the worm, shame and remorse, or perhaps—and the closet scene shows her capable of it—the triumph of the fouler part of her, and the pursuit of her son with hatred and vengeance. Does anybody drop tears over Laertes, that polished cutter of throats i' the church ? There remain Polonius and Ophelia. The comic side of Polonius is always played with such over-emphasis as to hide the dangerous side of him. His complicity in the murder of the elder Hamlet may be disputed, although it is not easy otherwise to explain his overweening influence with Claudius. He certainly conspired with the latter in his usurpation, and we cannot say what is the bound to his falseness.

Suppose he had not been slain behind the arras, but had lived to carry his tale to Claudius, what course of action would he have counselled? Like son, like father; his plan would have differed from the poisoned rapier only in being, perhaps, a little more politic. Polonius helps to remind us that we may have comic murderers, just as the Burghleys and other contemporary statesmen show that we may have pious murderers. As for Ophelia, she is one of those who are organised for unhappiness. Hamlet's disgust with life is so violent, just and incurable that the old magic of their love can never return, and his straits are such that, however he acts, enough misery will be produced to dethrone her frail reason.

I have submitted also that the evidence in Hamlet's possession never reaches that daylight certainty which justifies private vengeance. If Shakespeare had intended to exhibit a mind which is at once absolutely sure of itself and incapable of action, would he not have brought the murder to light by the agency of some courtier who had secretly witnessed it? In fact the ghost is the one great blot and uncombining ingredient in the play. Had Shakespeare preserved the mental climate of the original story the ghost might perhaps have been tolerated, but he is quite out of joint with so thorough a modern as Hamlet. He complicates the whole action, and steeps it in incongruity. Hamlet's desire to have more relative grounds than the

word of this visitant in whom it is impossible to believe fully except during his actual presence is in the highest degree natural. He therefore tries the experiment of the play, and fails. What he had hoped was to provoke Claudius to "proclaim his malefaction" in the ear of the court, for the case that has to be built up is one that will convince not only Hamlet, but also the public at large. What really is provoked? A temporary indisposition which can be explained away in two sentences the next day. It may convince Hamlet, but it certainly would not secure his acquittal before a jury.

But even supposing him to be justifiably certain, has he the practical means to kill Claudius without, by the same act, surrendering himself to death? Claudius was popular enough to override Hamlet's claims and have himself chosen king. In that office he had shown competence, his relations with England and Norway being most excellent. He had a levy of three thousand men in the immediate neighbourhood of the court whom he kept in good humour by frequent carousals. His courtiers were so loyal that the Court-play apparently awoke not the least suspicion or hostility in a single one of them, and that, even after Laertes' confession of his treachery, when Hamlet plunges his rapier into Claudius, they shriek "Treason! Treason!" and would no doubt have cut the young prince down were that not plainly superfluous. As against this, Hamlet is a student, just come home, super-

intelligent and a hater of bores and shams. His opinion of the masquerade of royalty may be gathered from that one remark of his: "Let's to the Court! for, by my fay, I cannot reason." He applies his literary criticism to every-day conversation, and analyses received platitudes with the most ruthless candour. To crown all, he is a Temperance Pioneer! In short, the situation is such that no one would have much chance of organising support enough to oust Claudius, but that Hamlet, by the sheer force of his superiorities, has no chance at all. Of course it is always possible for him to slay the king and sacrifice his own life to his vengeance. But that would be something worse even than "hire and salary," and he has no enthusiasm for dying. Many people assume that he has, but in fact he is philosopher enough to be afraid of death. True, like every man of high intellect, he has moments of moral nausea, when he almost thinks that the best thing is not to be born, the next best to leave life as quickly as may be. But he recoils from the invisible event; above all, he never caresses the idea of suicide. The great "to be or not to be" monologue, sometimes interpreted in this sense, is really the precise opposite. It is rather an admonition to himself to defy death which he sees to be probably bound up with his revenge, and not to suffer his great enterprise, to be turned away by the fear of death. In short he never is absolutely certain of the facts of the crime, nor in a position to punish it with safety

to himself. And, although Shakespeare cannot amend this latter circumstance, he does amend the former, and with exquisite dramatic courtesy allows Hamlet full evidence of the king's guilt of another murder before calling his retributive sword into action.

What counts against Hamlet in popular estimation is his continual self-reproach. But this springs just from his exacting ideal of action, for he would shorten a straight line to reach his end. Religious biography will furnish a parallel; it is not among the actual sinners that we find self-contempt and a consciousness of the unforgivable sin, but among the Bunyans and the Saint Alphonsus Ligouris. There is another motive behind Hamlet's outbursts. He is not certain enough to act, but his tense and tortured mind must find relief, and words are not irrevocable. But after the emotional debauch of his monologues, the lucid judgment returns, with its questionings and firm grasp of difficulties. Hamlet is compromised also by the speculative embroideries which his mind works over the drab stuff of experience. People think with Horatio that it is "to inquire too curiously" to find the dust of Alexander stopping a beer-barrel. But is it? Is not Hamlet rather the avid intellect, which must needs think out of things everything that is to be found in them? "Hamlet's obstacles are internal." He certainly has internal obstacles. He is hampered by conscience, natural affection, an exquisite

taste and a capacity for metaphysics ; very grave obstacles, if what is desired is immediate bloodshed. Some critics hold that Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* to purge his countrymen of these qualities which he perceived spreading, to the infinite prejudice of Elizabethan Jingoism. It may be so, and I am free to confess that, as far as public policy goes, his countrymen have reformed them indifferently. But it is just because of these failings that Hamlet possesses human significance. Without them, he might be very interesting from the point of view of a tiger, but he would never have touched and troubled our imagination. As it is, we think of him as the noble and courtly prince who passes through life, annotating it with a gloss of melancholy speculation that has been absorbed into the mind of Europe, and who so confronts it practically that the destinies adopt him for their minister, and, through him, draw, out of unexampled horrors, justice and even a certain terrible peace.*

As a perhaps tedious supplement, I submit that the character of Horatio has been as favour-

* The only sustainable charge that can be made against Hamlet is one of over-hasty action—with regard, I mean, to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. He sent them to death without anything like decisive proof of their complicity in the design to have him executed in England. There is nothing to show that they knew the contents of the original commission; indeed the contrary is established by their continuing their journey after losing Hamlet. Most people will however, accept the latter's justification of himself as satisfactory.

ably, as that of Hamlet has been unfavourably, misunderstood. He enjoys the reputation of being the strong, silent, truly virile man, held up in contrast to the gusty and barren metaphysician. In support of this there can be produced just a single speech of Hamlet's: against it there is the whole of Horatio's words and actions. The eulogy, like so many other passages, has, however, never been construed in its dramatic context. It is spoken, be it remembered, immediately before the play, when Hamlet is tense with the most terrible expectation. He is about to probe the King's conscience to the quick, and naturally wants corroboration of his own prejudiced eyes, and perhaps assistance in the scene that may follow. In order to induce the deplorable Horatio to render even this petty service it is necessary to flatter him, and the exaggerated courtesy, natural to Hamlet—as in the reception of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern—combines with his immediate need to produce superlatives. His own fine taste rebels against them, and, as is known, he concludes with “something too much of this!” (Were I a German I would suggest that these words are an amending note of Shakespeare on the MS., which he is known to have been revising, that he meant to recast the lines, and that his private note has been interpolated into Hamlet's speech.) What, as a matter of fact, is Horatio's record in the play? He is at Elsinore two months before he thinks it worth while to call on his old friend

Hamlet, although he knows the latter to be in the most grievous trouble. At the first appearance of the ghost he has not wit enough to address it in Latin, although that is what he was brought there for by Marcellus. At the second appearance he is not able even to tell Hamlet the time, and later is guilty of a much grosser ineptitude. Marcellus urges him to come on after the Prince and the ghost. "Oh!" says Horatio, "Heaven will direct it!" and his delegation of his duty to Providence has to be crushed by Marcellus' "Nay, let's follow him." At what stage he comes to know of the King's crime is not clear, but he certainly possesses all Hamlet's knowledge of it after the Court Play. And what does this strong silent man do? Organise a party, as Laertes found friends to organise one, to execute vengeance against Claudius? By no means. He has nothing better to say than that he very well noted the King and that Hamlet ought to rhyme the quatrain in which his frenzy extravagates. Afterwards, when the Prince is sent to England under the most sinister circumstances, does the good Horatio make an attempt either to accompany or to liberate him? As a matter of fact he lies conscientiously low, and cultivates the best relations with Claudius. His next opportunity is at Hamlet's relation of his escape from the death intended for him in England. Horatio has indeed the grace to admire Hamlet's superior firmness of character—"Why, what a king is this!"—but he does his best to

cancel this by sympathetic tears over Rosencranz and Guildenstern. Before the duel he administers draughts of discouragement and superstition, and he has not the sense to see that Laertes' rapier is unbated. In fact from beginning to end he is a wandering ineptitude who has never a single suggestion, and whose speech consists mainly of "Ay, my Lords," "That is most certain," "Is it possible," and other helpful phrases. At the last he has one good impulse to finish the poisoned cup, but the dying Hamlet intervenes, and Horatio addresses himself to funeral orations which are certainly much more after his heart. He is prayed merely to absent himself from felicity awhile, but we may be sure that he does not construe the last as the emphatic word, but stands in as an echo to Fortinbras and absents himself as long as possible. And this is the strong silent man after whom Hamlet should have modelled himself! In truth he compares poorly with Osric, who was at any rate a stylist.

I cannot abstain from a word on Hamlet as an art critic. His theory that the stage should hold the mirror up to nature is of course absurd, at least as far as gesture and outer expression of emotion goes. I refer rather to his employment of art as an oblique moral inquisition—a most remarkable anticipation of what Browning has to say in the Epilogue of "The Ring and the Book;" and to his delightful prophetic criticism of the two great achievements of the modern

MISUNDERSTANDING *HAMLET* 107

theatre—the musical comedy and the problem play. Polonius has grown impatient at the length of the fine epic passage recited by the players ; Hamlet turns on him with his unforgettable “ Oh, he must have a jig or a tale of bawdy, or he falls asleep.”

1905.

YOUNG EGYPT

YOUNG EGYPT

GENEVA, *September, 1909.*

THE Congress of the Jeunesse Egyptienne is over. The Rue Bartholomy is no longer splashed with the crimson and scarlet of the tarbouch which one learns is the correct term for what we more naturally call the fez. And as one sits by the lake shore, drowsed with the dim and misted beauty of the Swiss September, there are no grave, dark faces, no star and crescent favours, no cataracts of vowelled Arabic to force one back again to the dusty duties of political conflict.

All this is to say that the Congress, as a spectacle, was brilliant and picturesque. The Jeunesse Egyptienne is, to a large extent, a jeunesse dorée. It is also a movement of intellectuals. The great body of the delegates were students—students in law, medicine, or arts—who thronged here from Lyons, Paris, Dijon, Oxford. The President, M. Mohamed Fahmy, is a “free professor” of Mahometan law at the University of Geneva. Hamed El Alaily, who read perhaps the most brilliant paper at the Congress, “A Plea for a Con-

structive Policy," is at Oxford, and carries about him a curious sense at once of the fine essence of Oxford and the fine essence of that Arab culture which gave us Avicenna and Averroës. M. Loutfi Goumah, who swept the Congress off its feet on the second day with a passionate reply to Mr. Keir Hardie, entertains me in the evening with a lecture on Eastern lyrical poetry. When Egypt is free he assures me with a smile that he will at last have time to complete a criticism of German philosophy from the Arabic point of view.

Decidedly whatever you may call the Young Egyptians, you cannot call them uneducated or irresponsible. On the contrary, they manifest every sign of wealth, culture, knowledge of the world, and a courtesy suave beyond expression. There is a wide range of racial types, from the noble Arabian profile to something that seems almost Ethiopian. In social intercourse one is impressed by the fact that they have all gone to a good tradition for their manners and to a good tailor for their clothes. One is impressed still more by the evidences of firmness of character. Hardly any of them touches wine. Most of them do not seem to smoke. "You see," says one of the non-smokers, "tobacco darkens the complexion. And, *mon Dieu !* am I not dark enough already ? "

Whether this abstinence has any religious sanction at the present day is a matter difficult to determine. One hardly thinks so ; and yet

I have a picture of a stout and amiable pasha at the Congress slipping his Rosary Beads through his fingers with incredible industry, with a murmur for each bead of "Allah!"

For the moment there is one binding idea, and only one, dominant in the assembly, and that is not a religious but a political idea. Three parties are represented, grading down from fierce extremists to somewhat timid reformers, but let a speaker fling out the cry of "Egypt for the Egyptians" and Conservative hands clap as loudly as Radical hands to a fusillade of "Très biens" and "Bravos." The Congress is inspired by a sincere passion for nationality. It has no hatred for England except in so far as Egypt cannot belong at the same time to the English and to the Egyptians.

And here I must signalise the dramatic moment of the proceedings. Just as every picture has its centre of repose, so every assembly has its centre of tension. At Geneva this central point was found when M. Loutfi Goumah leaped to his feet to reply to some things that Mr. Keir Hardie had said, and to other things which he had not said. "Mr. Hardie has spoken of helping us to achieve 'some effective form of self-government.' We do not want 'some effective form of self-government.' Egypt demands a free constitution, flowing to her not from the British Parliament but from her own monarch, the Khedive. Mr. Hardie promises to ask questions in the House of

Commons. What sort of questions? He will ask whether Cairo has a good drainage system, and whether the water is drinkable in Alexandria. But we want fundamental questions about fundamental matters. We want him to ask what is to be the date of the evacuation."

My duty is not to appraise, but merely to chronicle facts, and without discussing the strange interpretation which exhibited Mr. Hardie as a Conservative, I have only to say that as M. Goumah proceeded with his speech, the tides of passion rose higher and higher in the Congress, and that he resumed his chair amid a tumult of cheers. Crimson tarbouches bobbed their way to the platform, and groups of students flung themselves on the orator, embracing him, and kissing his hands. "The Mazzini of Egypt!" shouted somebody beside me in the crowd.

Undoubtedly he is one of the men of the future. Small and spare, with a drooping moustache, he throbs with such intense energy that you expect to see electric sparks leap out of his gesturing figure. He speaks French, English, and Arabic with the same fluent precision. He has the gift of epigram, and, unlike his compatriots, a quick sense of humour. With Hamed El Alaily, and Mohamed Fahmy—this latter a striking figure with countless centuries of Oriental shrewdness in his face—he constitutes the pivot around which this new movement will revolve.

Opinions differ, and hopes will be disappointed, but for my part I regard this second Congress as opening a new epoch in the Egyptian Nationalist movement. The actual work of the three days, including the foundation of a new propagandist journal and the initiation of a system of free national schools in Egypt, has already been recorded in the newspapers. I am concerned only to give some faint sense of the tone and atmosphere of the Congress. It was alive in every fibre. The papers read, although somewhat too encyclopædic for the occasion, were the work of cultured men. The few differences as to details merely lent relief to the keenness and enthusiasm of the assembly. And with all this there was behind the whole programme a sincere desire for peace. The so-called "violence" of the speeches consisted merely in saying what every Englishman has heartily said with Simon De Montfort, and Hampden, and Locke, and John Stuart Mill.

* * * *

Much has happened since the Geneva Congress. That Tartuffe-Tartarin, Colonel Roosevelt, has trailed the Stars and Stripes in the foulest mud of Imperialism. M. Briand has forbidden the Congress of 1910 to meet in Paris, and, thereby, proclaimed the nothingness of France in international politics. The Suez Canal affair has on the one hand, unified national feeling in Egypt, and, on the other, has provoked British

Imperialists to a fresh campaign in favour of annexation. The problem has grown more acute, and at the same time more soluble. The Canal is the difficulty. But if the Canal be definitely neutralised, on terms fair to Egypt and England alike, what pretext will then remain for the maintenance of the occupation ?

THE FATIGUE OF
ANATOLE FRANCE



THE FATIGUE OF ANATOLE FRANCE*

THE autumn of M. Anatole France is coloured by the one vanity of human existence against which his soul had not hitherto adventured: he has become popular. "My last years," Schopenhauer used to say, "bring me roses, but they are white roses." It may be that there is a like pallor in the coronals which have of late been showered so abundantly on the great French master of irony, tenderness, and despair. It may be that he experiences but a sombre consolation at seeing his radiant and incomparable prose rendered, with many refractions, into English. But at all events he has achieved notoriety. Certain of his phrases—poison in crystal cups or ambrosia of the gods in vinegar-vials: who shall say?—have been finally adopted into the gold currency of literature. The man himself is no longer a veiled prophet. The famous bust in which he looks out over an Hebraic nose between a stiff imperial and what seems to be a loose forage

* *L'Île des Pingouins. Les Contes de Jacques Tournebrouche.* By Anatole France. 1908

cap, has passed through Europe, at least in photogravure. The book-reader of Brixton has been impelled as urgently as the bookseller of his own Quai Malaquais to guess at the secret behind that ridged and ambiguous mask. The face, some of his interpreters have said, is that of a *Bénédictin narquois*. Rather is it the face of a soldier ready to die for a flag in which he does not entirely believe, on condition, be it understood, that he shall not be asked to die in a tragic or, as one might say, in a muddy fashion. He looks out at you like a veteran of the lost cause of intellect, to whose soul the trumpet of defeat strikes with as mournful and vehement a music as to that of Pascal himself, but who thinks that a wise man may be permitted to hearten himself up in evil days with an anecdote after the manner of his master Rabelais.

M. France has achieved notoriety, but hardly happiness. If *L'Ile des Pingouins* has been one of the best discussed volumes of late years, it is none the less a bulletin of fatigue, which notifies us of the burial of yet another illusion. The book, indeed, seems intended as the last chapter of a period. In it Anatole France, savant, stylist, and Olympian, pronounces with affection and contempt a funeral discourse over Anatole France, republican, Socialist, and Dreyfusard. The man of letters lays aside, with smiling sadness, the sword of a fighting publicist, and an interesting case of dual personality comes to an end. The Socialists are naturally in despair.

At least one critic, belonging to that party, confesses that he has long entertained doubts not merely about the stability of M. France, but even about his sales, and thinks it probable that an edition of one of his books nowadays means only two hundred copies. But had not his greatest interpreter, George Brandes, foreseen the present reversion to type, as one may call it? "It may be," wrote Brandes, after hearing the master speak at a Socialist meeting in the Paris Trocadero in 1904, "that as the popular orator—a career for which he was not intended by nature—he has proclaimed himself rather more strongly convinced than he is in his inmost soul." Had not Doctor Trublet in *L'Histoire Comique* separated himself for ever from the "advanced" thinkers who believe that republicanism is the final truth of politics, and that by the application of this truth the human race is infinitely perfectible? "My business," says Trublet, "is to comfort men and console" them. How can one comfort or console anybody without lying? It was not that M. France refused to make sacrifices to the will to believe in political Utopias. On the contrary, he went so far as to write an introduction to the collected speeches of M. Emile Combes, and even, it was said, to read the novels of M. Zola. Having thus acquired a firm faith in humanity, he was at pains to record it in the course of a speech on Renan. "Lentement, mais toujours, l'humanité réalise les rêves des sages." That

was in 1903. In 1908, having come to understand that the process of realisation is as slow as the movement of a glacier and as tortuous as the way of an eagle in the air, he returns to the orbit of his temperament. His futility on Blessed Jeanne d'Arc laid aside, he contributes an introduction to the memoirs of Mademoiselle Loie Fuller, a dancer, and publishes *Penguin Island* and *Les Contes de Jacques Tournebroke*.

L'Ile des Pingouins is to all intents a comic history of France. The narrative is introduced by a characteristic preface, in which the author of so many brilliant reconstructions of the past denies, and not for the first time, the possibility of any history, serious or comic. He consults the masters of palæography, but they indignantly decline to be called historians. Who has ever detected them in an attempt to distil the scantiest trickle of life or truth from a document? That is an enterprise which may attract vain and imaginative persons, but for their part they work in the spirit of positive science. They confine themselves to verifiable facts—that is to say, to texts—and refuse to be tempted into the fantastic world of ideas. It is possible to be certain about the shape of words, but not about their significance. M. France passes on to the recognised historians, who are shocked to find that he proposes to write an original history. An original historian, they assure him, is the object of universal distrust and contempt. History may very well be the lie agreed upon;

the great point is that it is agreed upon. Readers of history do not like to be surprised ; they look to find only the stupidities with which they are already familiar, and regard any novel suggestion as an affront to some cherished belief. The historian must therefore be on his guard against originality. He must also be respectful towards established institutions, and, on these two conditions, success is within his grasp. Fortified by these counsels M. France proceeds, in much humility of spirit, to narrate the story of the island of Alca, from its beginnings in hagiography to its ending in dynamite. There is little need to set out here in any detail the substance of the book. The title is easily explained. The old saint Maël, a missionary of deep faith but defective eyesight, is transported to the Arctic regions in a miraculous stone trough. There, mistaking a colony of penguins for men and philosophers, he pronounces the formula of baptism over them, and creates a theological *impasse* which can only be relieved by the actual transformation of the penguins into human shape. The island is then towed by Saint Maël to the coast of Brittany, and there under the name of Penguinia, or Alca, it enters the comity of civilisation. It evolves through the customary stages, inventing in turns clothes—a suggestion of the devil—individual property, a royal dynasty, a patron saint, and the taxation of the weak for the benefit of the strong. These matters afford obvious scope for the subtle and

perverse spirit of M. France. The pages on the origin of property are not only powerful but even passionate: his heart is for the moment engaged in the writing. A chapter on the mediæval art of Penguinia gives him an opportunity to parody, with delightful malice, the English theorists of the pre-Raphaelite movement. But it must be confessed that the first half of the book languishes on the perilous edge of dulness. The serene improprieties with which M. France annotates his *Lives of the Saints*, mingling, as one might say, the odour of the smoke-room with the odour of sanctity, are very Latin, but not very amusing. M. France himself seems to perceive that his grasp on his material is weakening: he makes an abrupt plunge from the Renaissance into modern history, and his sprightliness is at once restored. The second part, comprising more than half the entire volume, is a continuation and conclusion of the novels which have been published since 1897 under the general title of *Histoire Contemporaine*. The cometary career of Boulanger and the Dreyfus Affaire are reconstructed with incomparable verve. Every phrase tells, every figure moves in the glow of supreme comedy. The Visire Ministry, which was carried into office by the reaction in favour of Dreyfus, "declared itself prudently progressive. Paul Visire and his colleagues were eager for reforms, and it was only in order to avoid compromising the prospect of these reforms that they refrained

from proposing them. For they were deep politicians, and they knew that to propose a reform is to compromise it." From history we pass on to prophecy. The fate of the Clemenceau Ministry, plunged ultimately by rich Jews, reckless journalists, and the intrigues of one Madame Cérès into an irreparable war, is somewhat vaguely outlined; and in a last chapter we are permitted to see M. France's vision of the future. It is not a very cheerful vision. The continued concentration of industry has evolved a society of but two classes, millionaires and employees. The millionaire type exhibits the physical characteristics of Mr. Rockefeller developed to the last limit of possibility. Drier of body, thinner of lip, and yellower of complexion than the old Spanish monks, they cultivate a mysticism and even an asceticism of opulence. Living in their offices on eggs and milk, they have no intercourse with the world save through the medium of an electric button: they steadily amass wealth of which they no longer see even the metallic symbols, and acquire infinite means for the satisfaction of desires which they no longer experience. The material constituents of this world of the future are monstrous and tentacular cities, temples of "slaughterous industry, infamous speculation, hideous luxury, and a colossal uniformity of ugliness." Such a society cannot be reformed; it can only be destroyed. And under the shattering logic of dynamite,

or rather of an explosive to which dynamite is as the crackle of a schoolboy's squib, the world of clerks and capitalists dissolves. An entire civilisation is effaced, and wild horses pasture on the site of the capital of Alca. Then the story of civilisation begins anew, the story without an end. The hunter comes, and after him, in a dreary cycle, the shepherd, the tiller of the soil, the weaver of wool, the worker in iron. The effaced civilisation is, with infinite labour, rebuilt. Once more we are in a world of millionaires and employees, of monstrous and tentacular cities. . . . The thing that has been is the thing that shall be, and the achievement of the future will be as that of the past. The epitaph of generations unborn will be that which has been written upon the tombstones of generations forgotten. "They were born, they suffered, they died." It is the Eternal Return of ancient philosophy, in a garment more sombre than any of which the ancients ever dreamed. It is less an Eternal Return, than an eternal and infinitely monotonous tautology.

Such is the wisdom to which Anatole France has come, after wandering for ten years in the desert of politics. One recalls the circumstances under which he came to appear in the *rôle* of a publicist. The year 1897 witnessed his election to the Immortals; it also witnessed the publication of the first two volumes of his *Histoire Contemporaine*. Until that year he had not descended from his tower of ivory to discover

the actual world. In his candidature for the Academy he was regarded as a Conservative, and was opposed to Ferdinand Fabre, a writer notorious for his hostility to the Church. There is no need to suggest a corrupt silence on his part, or a sinister coincidence; but the truth is that once safely installed in the chair vacated by M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, he began to exhibit an active interest in politics. He put his head out of the window, discovered the Dreyfus Affaire, and took his stand with the Socialists. He revised his judgments, even in matters of literature. Zola, whose "disgusting celebrity" he had declined to envy, and of whom he had written that no man had "so exerted himself to abase humanity, and to deny everything that is good and right," became for him not only a valiant citizen, but even a great novelist, "whose harping has raised up a spacious city of the ideal." In the interval M. France has had a wider experience of politics; he has rubbed intimate shoulders with the prophets of progress, and has watched the flux of events and the transformations of men. It would be unjust to say that *Penguin Island* is a recantation of his democratic and socialistic utterances. He is still the son of the Revolution, and there is a tremor of sincere passion in his voice as he tells us of the grimed and hungry workers who swarm out in times of Royalist aggression to defend the Republic—the Republic which nevertheless is to them a symbol of hope merely and not of fulfilment.

He proclaims not the bankruptcy of Socialism, but rather the emptiness of politics as such. It is impossible not to identify France with his own Bidault-Coquille, the student of asteroids. Bidault-Coquille had come down from the old fire-escape, from which he was accustomed to observe the heavens, in order to fight for the eternal principles of justice which he took to be involved in the *Affaire Pyrot* or *Dreyfus*. He found himself in alliance with hysterical adventuresses, ambitious generals, vain journalists, and the St. Pauls of Socialism, eager for Utopia, but also eager for portfolios. Justice is triumphant, but the triumph is clouded with meanness, and he returns to his asteroids, disillusioned, and disillusioned most of all with regard to his own motives. "Go back to your fire-escape and your stars," he says to himself, "but go back in humility of spirit. You thought to yourself, 'I will step down into the streets and show myself a noble and valiant citizen. Then I shall be able to repose calmly in the esteem of my contemporaries and the approval of history.' But you have not even suffered for conscience sake; for with the decay of belief and character your countrymen have become incapable of that savagery which once lent a tragic greatness to the conflict of ideas. Now that you have buried your illusions; now that you know how hard it is to redress injustice and how one must be ever beginning anew, you are going back to your asteroids.

Go back then! but go back in humility of spirit."

The conclusion was inevitable, and rightly considered it casts no sort of discredit upon politics. It is no doubt useful that parliament-men should be credulous of their power to create by Statute a new heaven and a new earth. It is perhaps excusable that Socialism should believe in the infinite perfectibility of the human race. But it is necessary that the world of culture should retain its sense of limitation. Humanity must at all costs refuse to be satisfied with itself. If progress belongs at all to the sphere of real things and of good things, its future depends on those who rise up to question its reality. Faust cannot be redeemed except by the serviceable hostility of Mephistopheles. Anatole France is a scandal and a stumbling-block to many serious minds. Of the deep waters of religion he has never tasted; he is a sense short, or, as the psychologists say, he has a blind spot on his soul. But that much said, is it not wise to remember that Ecclesiastes also is among the prophets? Is not the whole Christian conception of life rooted in pessimism, as becomes a philosophy expressive of a world in which the ideal can never quite overcome the crumbling incoherence of matter? May we not say of all good causes what Arnold said only of the proud and defeated Celts: "They went down to battle but they always fell?" Behind politics there is economics; behind

economics there is philosophy; and when it comes to a philosophy of values, optimism, with regard to our present plane of experience, can only be regarded as an attractive form of mental disease.

A comparison of *L'Ile des Pingouins* with *Gulliver's Travels* is obvious, although not perhaps very illuminating. M. France is suave where Swift is barbaric; he is dainty where Swift is foul; but it is none the less true that Swift's disbelief in humanity was childlike and elementary compared with that which hints itself through *Penguin Island*. Between the two there is the tropical forest of Romanticism with its splendid and noxious blooms; there is the unplumbed, salt, estranging sea of all who have praised death rather than life, from Leopardi and Schopenhauer to D'Annunzio and Hardy. What then? "The life of a people," writes one of the mythical sages quoted in this book, "is a succession of misfortunes, crimes, and stupidities. This is true of the Penguin nation as of all others. But with that reserve made, their history is admirable from beginning to end." There is a certain malice in the phrasing, but who that has lived and suffered would challenge its substance of truth? Reason and justice constitute, no doubt, the elements of a pure science, but it is a science of very imperfect application to the concrete world. M. France has had the courage of his discouragement. He has but repeated in terms of politics what

he had already said in terms of art and erudition, of passion and philosophy—namely, that the eye is not filled with seeing nor the ear with hearing. Even more than Bourget, and precisely because his touch is lighter than Bourget's, and because he imagines that his rapier is that of an enemy, he continues the tradition of that Latin and Catholic pessimism which is so indispensable a propædæutic to any valorous religion. We have heard of a tyranny which was tempered by *chansons*. A pessimism, stabbed and gashed with the radiance of epigrams, as a thundercloud is stabbed by lightning, is a type of spiritual life far from contemptible. A reasonable sadness, chastened by the music of consummate prose, is an attitude and an achievement that will help many men to bear with more resignation the burden of our century. If there be inexcusable flippancies, and there are many in *L'Ile des Pingouins*, they belong, perhaps, for the most part to that temperamental heritage of Latinism which we barbarians have never been able to understand. For the rest, the book is merely an indication that the cobbler is about to return to his last. After ten years of politics Anatole France is fatigued, but by expressing he has banished his fatigue. Two lines of development seem now to be open to him, and, unhappily, one of them is that *facilis decensus* which his master Renan chose in his old age. *Les Contes de Jacques Tournebroke*—a volume with curious red and gold

and blue and gold illustrations by Léon Lébègue—seems to indicate a declension towards the lower level of his temperament. It is enough to say of this collection of stories that it is by turns graceful, mediocre, and abject, and that there is not a characteristic turn of phrase or a memorable idea in it from beginning to end. The other mood in which M. France may elect to cast the books that he has yet to write—he is sixty-five—is that which gave us the tenderness of *Le Livre de Mon Ami*, and the spacious sadness of the best pages of *Le Jardin d'Épicure*. M. France will not spend his last years, as Taine did, “reading Marcus Aurelius as a sort of liturgical exercise.” Epicure of emotions that he is, and that was Brunetière’s judgment against him, he will act on taste and not on any principle. That he will choose his own road is certain; let us hope that this man, whose every page if not a European event (and what page now is ?) is at least a shining masterpiece of style, will choose the high road.

INTERNATIONAL
SOCIALISTS

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

STUTTGART, *September*, 1907.

I MERELY strayed into Stuttgart. The high peaks of the Dolomites, and the higher prices of Salzburg—Salt City, without the Lake—have faded into history. The Munich Alp-tourists, who had lain back, limply mountainous, in the corners, showing in the flame of their faces and their peeling skins the brand of glacier-sunshine, have “steiged” heavily out of their native city, where pictures and potations will soon undo the severities of the holiday season. You have passed Augsburg, where somebody confessed his insuperable objections to Confession. You have drunk a crowded and unseemly beer at Ulm. And you are in Stuttgart. . . .

The Congress is going on in the Liederhalle, a combined restaurant and concert-hall. As one sits here in the garden, under an absolute stillness of chestnuts and acacias, it is hard to imagine so much of life as there is in the undistinguished building. Two or three delegates walk up and down, smoking and meditating. A

door-keeper leans on the bar counter, under red-and-black and red-and-yellow streamers, and drinks cool, dark beer. A far-from-tidy Fraulein crunches her leisurely way across the gravel to take your order. Another has fallen asleep, her head leaned back against a beech trunk. In the lines of her face there comes out, as often in sleep, a certain forlornness, a sense of defeated dreams. It is a commentary. There are brown and twisted leaves on the gravel; and on state-creeds and state-crafts, too, there comes the inevitable autumn.

But in which of all the Utopias, smouldering in certain fierce eyes that met yours to-day in Stuttgart, will there be no stain of the burden and sorrow of women? If one never got tired, one would always be with the revolutionaries, the re-makers, with Fourier, and Kropotkin. But the soul's energy is straitly limited; and with weariness there comes the need for compromise, for "machines," for repetition, for routine. Fatigue is the beginning of political wisdom.

Those who read the papers know fairly well the resolutions, or, rather, theses, to which the Congress said "Aye." To an actual spectator the dominant note was that of realism. Here and there the vague music of a passionate revolt and an impossible redemption broke out, as when Rosa Luxemburg, clutching her plaid shawl, called up the bloody ghosts of Russian comrades in judgment on the weak "good-sense" of the Congress. But most of the speakers submitted

to the strict discipline of fact. Kautsky opposed the demand for the legal establishment of a minimum wage. A powerful argument was led to show that if you establish a minimum wage it tends to operate as a maximum. "Yes!" said Ellenbogen, of Austria. "Theoretically your position is a strong one. Ten years ago I should have voted for it. But since then we have made the experiment in practice. A minimum wage of four francs a day has been established in Zurich, and it has not operated as a maximum."

The Swiss delegates accepted the statement of fact, and at once the Congress swung over to the side of Ellenbogen. "Practical!" cried Vaillant. "You are practical enough. Our programme was once a gospel of enthusiasm. Now it is a party machine, a war-chest, a game of tactics."

In effect this was the dominant tone. The only vote that rang in discord with it was that in favour of the resolution condemning the whole work of colonisation as intrinsically and irredeemably bad. This decision was a genuine surprise. Bebel, Vollmar, Bernstein, the English and Americans, all declared against it, but it was, nevertheless, carried. An analysis of the majority drew attention to another characteristic of the Congress—the dominance of the national idea. Bebel and Bernstein were sufficiently clear on this point. The constitution of the Congress was based on a recognition of it. In the old

International which was created by Marx, and afterwards, with the teeth of Bakunin, ate Marx up, you had thorough, abstract internationalism. The workers were affiliated directly with the central committee. But with the Congress of 1907 they were affiliated only through the medium of their national organisations.

This raises another question. What will be the binding-power and practical value of the Stuttgart resolutions? Are not those who claim that a complete synthesis of nationalism and internationalism has been effected a little premature? Colonisation and colonies stank in the nostrils of the Stuttgart Congress. But will Mr. Ramsay Macdonald in the House of Commons and Herr Bebel in the Reichstag act upon that decision?

As a spectacle, a masque of personalities, the Congress lives in one's memory. It may be a superficial point of view, but it was irresistible. The marvellous interpreters! Whenever anyone speaks they must speak, and they have spoken for five days without growing hoarse.

Of course, there were complaints. Vaillant complained; Vandervelde ascribed the feud between the Labour Party and the S. D. F. to the difficulty of rendering "Klassenkampf" in English. Quelch was verbally mistranslated, before being geographically translated. And there was the Indian Princess.

Hyndman has a long beard, which is a considerable dramatic asset. One still sees him

shaking his hands and shouting at Singer, who—large, broad, and with a slight air of the police official—swings the Presidential bell back and forth, to the horror and final collapse of all ears. And Hervé, standing on the table so that all the world might see him, voting for the majority's anti-militarist resolution "with both hands." It must not be thought that the proceedings were in the least tumultuous. They were vehement, but then there is always the House of Commons. By the way, everybody smoked at will in the hall, and one saw many delegates drinking beer at their tables.

Is there a definite, Socialist way of dressing? The red tie has long since gone over to museums and to popular novels. The fluid felt hat is not at all universal. Does anything remain? Well, there is Hervé, in a curious tunic buttoned tight up to the throat, and trousers which bag in an unprecedented way as he hurries along, gesticulating with his knees. But there is no exclusive, Socialist dress.

"Do you think," I asked a newspaper man in the Hotel Royal—the English delegates were having a concert there, and you heard the chorus rolled heavily out through their door—

Let cowards flinch, and traitors fear,
We'll keep the Red Flag flying here—

"do you think that the Congress has been of much use?" "It will do more to guarantee

the peace of the world," he said, "than twenty Hague Conferences. If everybody could afford to travel, there would be no wars. People would discover their neighbours to be so remarkably human. Besides, I am grateful to Stuttgart for not taking it out of us. At the Hague I paid £22 a month for two rooms in a private house. The Brazilian delegation left their hotel because they were charged £34 a day for four rooms. Peace hath its voracities no less redoubtable than war."

I cannot better his words. Stuttgart did not raise its prices. And when you had swept away preconceptions and prejudices, you found International Socialism unexpectedly human—human, above all, in its fundamental mistake.

A FRENCHMAN'S
IRELAND

A FRENCHMAN'S IRELAND*

IT is the French that have come closest to the secret of Ireland. De Beaumont, that great pupil of De Tocqueville, in 1839, Cardinal Perraud in 1869, painted our national life with the authoritative brush of masters. In addition to these we have had an unbroken line of studies, sketches, and monographs in which Daryl, Béchaux, Le Roz, Fournier, Schindler, Potez, Filon, Flach, De Lavergne, and a cloud of other witnesses have said their word. Edouard Rod shaped the personal tragedy of Parnell into a novel; and in one of his most recent stories Paul Bourget has shuddered at the dresses of fashionable Dublin, and yielded with lyrical abandon to the drowsy and purple magic of the Western lotus-land. M. Paul-Dubois finds one-half of the explanation of this old alliance in history, and the other in likeness of blood and

* This study appears as the Introduction to the English version of *L'Irlande Contemporaine*, by M. Paul-Dubois, published under the title of *Contemporary Ireland* (Maunsell & Co., Dublin. New Edition. 3s. 6d. net.)

temperament. In exchange for the swords of the Wild Geese, France sent us back priests, or at least the learning that turned Irish boys into priests. She sent too, in later and not less disastrous years, Hoche and Humbert ; and both nations have good memories, and until a very little while ago they shared a common hatred. The Irish mind is, moreover, like the French, "lucid, vigorous and positive," though less methodical, since it never had the happiness to undergo the Latin discipline. France and Ireland have been made to understand each other.

M. Paul-Dubois, then, has the advantage of temperamental sympathy, wise forerunners, and a long tradition. He had, further, the advantage of language, for it is perhaps only in French that Sociology can become scientific without ceasing to be human. His personal equipment is of the first order. Son of the late President of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, son-in-law of the great Taine, and himself one of the chief officials of the Cour des Comptes, he is a member of the group which Brunetière's erudite enthusiasm gathered round the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Was it not Taine who originated the phrase "well-documented," and made it the touchstone of all books dealing with social or historical science ? At all events it is in that spirit of thoroughness that M. Paul-Dubois has wished to write. The extent of his reading may be gathered from the references in his foot-

notes. He paid more than one visit to Ireland, and had he but met some member of the Irish party—of which he writes with a harshness that is constantly in contradiction with itself—he might fairly claim to have met everybody. The Irish reader of his book may not be in entire agreement with his conclusions. To someone armed with special knowledge on this subject, his exposition may seem inadequate; to someone moved by special passion on that subject, his criticism may even prove an irritant; but, when all is said, his five hundred crowded pages represent the attempt of a mind, at once scientific and imaginative, to see Ireland steadily, and to see it whole. If it is comforting to be understood, it is also of some profit to be misunderstood in a friendly way. M. Paul-Dubois confesses on our behalf no sins that someone or other has not already shouted from the house-tops. Whatever he may have to say of the internal life of Ireland, his verdict on the international issue is given clearly and definitely for Ireland and against England. His voice is raised for the Gaelic League, and against linguistic Imperialism; for the ploughed field, and against the grazing ranch; for Home Rule, and against the Act of Union. One may wish to enter a *caveat* against this or that contention, but the book is founded not on prejudice, or unreasoned feeling, or raw idealism, but on a broad colligation of facts; and, with all reserves made, I believe that it will in due time take rank with

the great studies of modern communities like Bodley's "France" and Münsterberg's "The Americans."

What, then, is the Irish Question as seen by this sociologist, so inspired and so equipped? It is "an extreme case of social pathology," an instance of the phenomenon called arrested development. It is to history that one naturally turns for proof and illustration of this thesis; and if, as a great Shakespearean critic has said, tragedy is simply waste, the history of Ireland as it passes before us in M. Paul-Dubois' Introduction, marshalled in sombre and picturesque lines, is essential tragedy indeed. It matters nothing whether we approach it in the spirit of those who desire revenge or of those who desire reconstruction: the impression is the same. A civilisation shaken by Norse invasion before it had quite ripened; swept by Anglo-Norman invasion before it had quite recovered; a people plunged in an unimaginable chaos of races, religions, ideas, appetites, and provincialisms; brayed in the mortar without emerging as a consolidated whole; tenacious of the national idea, but unable to bring it to triumph; riven and pillaged by invasion without being conquered—how could such a people find leisure to grow up, or such a civilisation realise its full potentialities of development and discipline? There are writers who would have us burn our Irish Histories. But the historical method imposes itself, not out of political passion, but

by a mere scientific necessity, upon all students of contemporary social, or, indeed, spiritual problems. What is no doubt important is that the past should be studied by the social reformer not for its own sake but for the sake of the present, and from the point of view of the present. It is by this purpose that M. Paul-Dubois has been guided in his masterly Historical Introduction ; and I do not know of any summary of the same length which traces the forces of current Irish life so clearly to their origins, and sets the fabric of fact, by which we are to-day confronted, in such true and vivid perspective. But over and beyond that, his Introduction possesses the interest of literature. The period since the Union has never been outlined with more telling or more human touches. O'Connell, the inventor of that "constitutional agitation" which is now the prime weapon of all democracies, passes away leaving "a great memory but not a great party." Young Ireland affords us the supreme instance of the antithetical temperaments ever to be found in Nationalist politics : Davis, the reformer, inspired by love of Ireland, and Mitchel, the revolutionist, inspired by hatred of England. And so through Famine and Fenianism we come down to the brilliant feebleness of Butt and the icy passion of Parnell, who "had more followers than friends," and to the struggle of the Gaelic Renaissance for "psychological Home Rule."

For this is, in last analysis, what M. Paul-Dubois

takes to be the deep malady of Ireland : She has not gained the whole world, but she has come perilously near losing her own soul. A certain laxity of will, a certain mystical scepticism in face of the material world, an eloquence which, in depicting Utopias, exhausts the energy that might better be spent in creating them, a continual tendency to fall back on the alibi of the inner life, make Ireland the Hamlet, or still more, the Rudin of the nations. Is this to say that she is unfit for modern, economic civilisation ? By no means. M. Paul-Dubois, having sounded every weakness and surveyed every difficulty, ends with the belief that the forces of re-growth will prevail over the process of decay ; and that although Ireland's last cards are now on the table, she is capable, if she plays them well, not only of preserving an ancient people but of creating a new civilisation.

What is the path to this achievement ? First of all, under the present regime, England is the enemy. If Ireland is to realise herself, she must become mistress of her own hearth, her own purse, and her own cupboard. She does assuredly stand in urgent need of peace from politics, and so far her Unionist critics are right. There is indubitably a deep sense in which a nation's life begins where her politics end. People speak as if the outcry against Parliamentaryism were a novel and a unique thing. But, fifty years ago, Marx taught all realists to crack the shells of political formulas and parties

and judge them by the moral and economic kernel within. To-day you can pick up anywhere in Paris or Brussels half-a-dozen pamphlets called "The Crisis of Parliamentarianism," "The Absurdity of Parliamentarianism," or "The End of Parliamentarianism." But that peace from the purely political struggle, which is so indispensable if Ireland is to develop character and create material wealth, can come to her only as a result of political autonomy. Until autonomy is won—carrying with it a re-adjustment of taxation—"on the cause must go." And the politicians who keep it going, whatever their special party or tactics, are playing the part of economic realists quite as effectively as any worker on the land or at the loom.

M. Paul-Dubois naturally devotes many chapters to the Land Question. He rightly treats it as a complexus of three questions—the tenure, the distribution, and the use of the land. The first two are being solved, in a fashion, at the cost of Irish taxes, and by the pledging of Irish rates, by the Estates Commissioners and the Congested Districts Board. Landlordism is dying, and dying meanly, "its last thought being of a bargain to be made." The edifice of Feudalism is being dismantled at a cost that raises a very real menace of national bankruptcy, but at all events the grim walls are coming down. But while the liberation of the Irish countryside from landlordism was necessary, it is not sufficient. The farmer

must learn to use his land productively ; and so there must be a great development of agricultural education, leading up to a general system of " mixed farming." The Department of Agriculture must therefore be a prime concern of a self-governing Ireland. He must learn to combine ; and in this respect, at least as regards the small holders, Co-operation possesses the secret of the future. He must come free of the egoism and pessimism which have remained in his blood since the Great Famine ; and nothing can expel these except the singing and dancing Gaelic League. But, even with all this accomplished, he will still be a snake-strangled Laocoon until he has in some wise reformed and mastered his Railways and Banks.

When we turn to the industrial condition of the country we find, since the Union, a steady degeneration of economic tissue. Population doubles between 1800 and 1841, but manufacture decays. The cotton workers of Belfast fall in number within that period from 27,000 to 12,000 ; and the factory hands of Dublin from 4,938 to 682. The consumption of luxuries, an excellent test of wealth, shows an immediate decline, tobacco falling in thirty years by 37 per cent. and wine by 47 per cent. Loss of trade follows loss of the flag. London, having become the political centre of gravity of Ireland, tends also to become her financial and commercial centre of gravity. There is a diminution of the productive, and a great increase of the parasitic

classes. The home market slips away from the home manufacturer ; a sort of mania of exchange takes possession of the country ; and she imports much that she might produce at home, and exports much that she might consume at home, paying ruinous tribute on both processes to the Shylocks of transit. It is a situation too sadly familiar to us all. M. Paul-Dubois' remedy, too, is familiar ; it is the programme of the men of 1779 and of the Industrial Pioneers of to-day. Use at home as many as you need of the things that are made at home, and make at home as many as possible of the things that are used at home. He neither anticipates nor desires any notable development of industry on the great scale, but looks for the prosperity of Ireland to progressive agriculture, and the smaller rural industries that come naturally to cluster around it.

Such is, in bare outline, the diagnosis of Ireland made by this detached and sympathetic student. He touches upon many other subjects, upon that of Clericalism and Anti-Clericalism, with particular delicacy and insight. One may regret that, with his French experience, he does not discuss such problems as that now rising very definitely on the political horizon : Does Ireland stand to gain or to lose by Protection ? One may find a fault of line or of colour here and there, or chance on an irritating phrase. But on the whole and as a whole this is the best book that has been written in recent years on the problems of Ireland. The meaner journalism

may seek in it for nothing better than party capital. But the worker in any Irish movement, who possesses the supreme wisdom of humility, and who had rather be bettered than flattered, will be glad to have seen himself in M. Paul-Dubois' mirror. His last message is one of hope. He may, as his Conclusion shows, have underrated the resolution of Ireland to secure integral Home Rule—a National Government being a delicate and intricate machine which cannot be set working in halves. He may, by times, have seemed to forget that there are many kinds of Conciliation, that, for instance, an infallible method of conciliating a tiger is to allow oneself to be devoured. But, as between us and our rulers, he gives his verdict, on the evidence, for Ireland and against England. And he foreshadows a possible unification of all progressive parties on the Irish side, a tacit Concordat under which, on the sole condition that the national idea be not submerged or the national flag lowered in surrender, all progressive parties would come to regard themselves as but different regiments of the same Army of Advance. May that hope come true!

REASON IN RHYME

REASON IN RHYME

WHY should all the bad verse be on the side of the Act of Union? That question forced itself on us all with fresh insistence this Summer when Mr. William Watson published, in our leading Unionist daily, an Ode entitled IRELAND ONCE MORE, in which he seemed to recant his old advocacy of the cause of freedom. The following reply appeared in the *Evening Telegraph* under the title of TOO MUCH WATSON, on the day following Mr. Watson's poem. It is now submitted as an answer to the question with which this note begins. One should, perhaps, add by way of introduction that Mr. Watson counselled us, in the best tone of retrospective sympathy, to forget the past, burn our national title-deeds, and throw our destiny in the hotchpot of Empire. Mr. Watson, in old days, was a specialist in the damnation of Abdul the Damned. His Ode will be found in the *Irish Times* of July 15, 1910.

Will Watson, of the still unanchored art;
What random gust, what overwhelming sea
Has riven *you* apart
From us, and from the flagship of the free?

You whose rich phrase, and vibrant, wont to be
Trumpet and drum of onset and attack ;
Who, when of Abdul's ways you stooped to
sing,
Would give us just the dire, full-throated
thing ;
Now, when that much-damned man has got
the sack,
You change your tune, and make to pipe us
back
From honour, and the task of Liberty !
Why argue, though ? The plain position is
Your are mistaken in your premises.
You blind your sight with hot, emotional
mists,
Your way of thought is greatly too morose
And moist and lachrymose,
For us, a muddled State's last realists.
We Irish, to be brief,
Are nowise grieviers for the sake of grief.
I pray you, dry those sympathetic tears,
They rust the will ; and, Will, your nation's
sin
Is no dead shame, meet to be covered in,
But a live fact that sears.
Cancel the past ? Soothly when it befalls
That ye amend the present, and are just.
Go knock your head on Dublin Castle walls :
Are they irrelevant, historic dust,
Or a hard present-tense ?
Search through the large print of the Statute
Book

For your much-valued Lords' benevolence,
And, swept in vision westward, snatch a look
At that dim land, where hunger claims to be
The honoured guest in every family ;
And the slain sun writes, in a scribble of shame,
The word of utter Hell, Clanricarde's name.
Go South and North ;

Weep if you will along the dismal quays,
Watching the unreturning ships go forth
To fling our seed of strength and hope and
worth

In far, untributary ways.

And then the soul is something—at least in
verse.

Ours, poet, is to be a thing of straw,
A stained numb thing, that sits without the
law

Of yours, great master of the universe ?
Most nobly planned ! But, Watson, there's
a text—

Done in stout English in King James's reign—
Which says that souls are not to be annexed,
Not for the whole world's gain.

Cancel the past ! Why, yes ! We, too, have
thought

Of conflict crowned and drowned in olives of
peace ;

But when Cuchullin and Ferdiadh fought
There lacked no pride of warrior courtesies
And so must this fight end.

Bond, from the toil of hate we may not cease :
Free, we are free to be your friend.

And when you make your banquet, and we
come,

Soldier with equal soldier must we sit,
Closing a battle, not forgetting it.

With not a name to hide,

This mate and mother of valiant "rebels"
dead

Must come with all her history on her head.

We keep the past for pride :

No deepest peace shall strike our poets dumb :

No rawest squad of all Death's volunteers,

No rudest man who died

To tear your flag down in the bitter years,

But shall have praise, and three times thrice
again,

When at that table men shall drink with men.

ON SAYING GOOD-BYE

ON SAYING GOOD-BYE

THE smell of the sea, so raw and stringent in a landsman's nostrils, brings thoughts with it and a strange spume of memories. To me it brings a perception of what people mean when they toss in the air that dusty adjective, "cynical." A cynic is a man who, finding himself, for all striving, incurably sad from the lips in, sets himself to be incorrigibly gay from the lips out. It is a triumph of will over temperament, a way of courage, and, by times, even a way of nobleness.

So it appears to me at least with the wash of the river about the brattling boat. But why should cables and gangways, cranes and the throb of steam, waved white handkerchiefs and all that apparatus of adieu, set anyone framing definitions of "cynicism"? It is because a dead Frenchman, who had not wit enough even to keep himself from being forgotten, a cynic as they say, one Brizeux, murmurs to himself in one of his comedies as I murmur to myself every time I leave Ireland: "Do not cry out against *la patrie*. Your native land after all will give you the two most exquisite pleasures of your life, that

of leaving her and that of coming back." He left many other sharp sentences along his way, but I only remember that of Cécile after she had transferred her affections. "And to think that six months ago I loved Alphonse! Mon Dieu! How he has changed!"

There are no taxis in my native city of Dublin. But the depressed jarvey who drove me to the North Wall knows that they are coming. He starts already in his dreams at the hoot of their horns. You cannot stand against science, he says: look at Corbett, and Tommy Burns, and Johnson. A man can't get bread at it nowadays, although, of course, "when a body meets a free-spoken, free-handed gentleman like yourself, sir; none o' these mane divils that'd be re-thrictin' you to your legal fare, mind you. . . ." The electric trams were bad enough, but this other would be the end. The Merrion Square doctors were good friends of the poor man, would think nothing of taking your car for two or three hours and leaving a sovereign in your palm, but first one got a motor and now they all have motors. What is one to say?

A member of Parliament ought to be a minister of consolation, at all events in matters of livelihood. All that occurs to me to tell my driver is that he is an element in an interesting transition in the organisation of transport. The domestication of horses created him and his tribe, the domestication of petrol is in course of blotting them out. Mr. Galsworthy will write

a play on the subject and make us quiver unhelpfully ; and there is always the workhouse coffin to look to, and an absolutely gratuitous burial. Meantime, he had better be rehearsing his adieus. But it seems hardly worth while dropping that oil into his wounds. There will, one fears, be more hunger than dignity in his leave-taking. Semi-starvation, mitigated by a gay heart and an incessant tongue, will take him, and not gently, by the hand, and show him the Way Out. And by way of monument he shall have, perhaps, the one-ten millionth part of a paragraph in some economic history that will be written by some sociologist of Teutonic extraction.

An old woman, once questioned by a journalist, declared that the only bothersome thing about walking was that the miles began at the wrong end. Kant, who could talk to Time and Space like an equal, is dead, and so nobody will ever know what the old lady meant. I record the observation here merely because it sounds so horribly intelligent.

But there is a constant heart-break in travel which comes from this that every departure is a sort of geographical suicide. To live anywhere even for an hour or a day is to become inwoven into a manifold tissue, material and spiritual. You cannot pluck yourself suddenly out without carrying a fringe of destruction, and it is your own personality that dies in every snapped fibre. Philosophers have thought of the soul as a

spiritus—a rapid gust of breath blown along the worlds and quickly dissipated. In truth our conscious life is like a white drift of fog that leaves a vestige of itself clinging to every object that it passes. It is a sustained good-bye. I cannot reach any thought except by leaving another. Even so common and kindly an experience as dinner is not exempt from this spiritual succession duty : your coffee is bitter with the unspoken adieus of the soup, and the fish, and the fowl, and the roast over whose graves you have marched to fulfilment. Life is a cheap table d'hôte in a rather dirty restaurant, with Time changing the plates before you have had enough of anything.

We were bewildered at school to be told that walking was a perpetual falling. But life is, in a far more significant way, a perpetual dying. Death is not an eccentricity, but a settled habit of the universe. The drums of to-day call to us, as they call to young Fortinbras in the fifth act of *Hamlet*, over corpses piled up in such abundance as to be almost ridiculous. We praise the pioneer, but let us not praise him on wrong grounds. His strength lies not in his leaning out to new things—that may be mere curiosity—but in his power to abandon old things. All his courage is a courage of adieus.

The romance of travel appealed to many in old days, and now, after menace of extinction, it has been conclusively restored by the Tariff Reform deputations. Others were light enough to think that no one can travel without striking

one day upon the path of wisdom. But this cannot altogether be granted. We Leinstermen used to hit off the idealism of distance in a proverb: "All the cows in Connaught have long horns." Clarence Mangan was of the same mind:

Moor, Egyptian, Persian, Turk, and Roman
Tread one common downhill path of doom:
Everywhere the word is man and woman,
Everywhere the old sad sins find room.

But Brizeux cuts deeper when he shows that the true value of going away is that it enables one to come back. I once knew a man who was commissioned by a railway company to write a booklet on the attractions of certain towns, among others, Xyz. He produced this page: "Attractions of Xyz. Print here in large type all the trains by which it is possible to leave Xyz." He was a native of it, and in such a light must one's native place sometimes appear. You burn to break the monotone with a great shout, to shake its trivial dust off your feet, to strain to yours the throbbing bosom of life, to mix brooks and stars and art and love and youth into one crashing orchestra of experience. And then, when you have taken this wide way, you find yourself burning to come back to that native place of yours where, as you now remember, the water was more cordial than wine, and the women sweeter than angels.

There is only one journey, as it seems to me,

in this inweaving of parables and facts, in which we attain our ideal of going away and going home at the same time. Death, normally encountered, has all the attractions of suicide without any of its horrors. The old woman when she comes to that road will find the miles beginning at the right end. We shall all bid our first real adieu to those brother-gaolers of ours, Time and Space ; and though the handkerchiefs flutter, no lack of courage will have power to cheat or defeat us. "However amusing the comedy may have been," wrote Pascal, "there is always blood in the fifth act. They scatter a little dust on your face ; and then all is over for ever." Blood there may be, but blood does not necessarily mean tragedy. The wisdom of humility bids us pray that in that fifth act we may have good lines and a timely exit ; but, fine or feeble, there is comfort in breaking the parting word into its two significant halves, *à Dieu*. Since life has been a constant slipping from one good-bye into another, why should we fear that sole good-bye which promises to cancel all its fore-runners ?

1910.

